

Your Study Bible

John Weaver Weddell

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Your Study Bible

Keys that unlock each of the sixty-
six books of the Word of God,
from a Pastor's notes through forty
years of personal study

By

JOHN WEAVER WEDDELL, D.D.

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FOREWORD

"It went with me through Moody's and Sam Jones' and Gypsy Smith's meetings, and to England and Keswick, where I read it anew under English skies. It is about all I am worth—and more." So wrote, modestly, the author of this book in a personal letter to the Editor in speaking of the Study Bible that he had used for forty years. "It is the fruit of my life work with the old Book—and I have stayed pretty close by the Word through these forty years." And as the Editor began to get glimpses of the remarkable fruits of Dr. Weddell's life-time "staying by" the Word of God, he coveted these riches for the entire family of Sunday School Times readers.

So there commenced an every-week series by Dr. Weddell of what proved to be the most enriching book-by-book Bible study. The Sunday-School Times has ever been privileged to give. There is a whole generation of marvelous research compacted into the single article which makes the preliminary chapter of the present book. And it is with gratitude, and prayer for God's further blessing upon these rich Bible-book studies, that The Sunday School Times now offers them in this convenient form for permanent reference and ready use, in response to a wide demand that they should thus be brought together. With the help of these simple, easily used studies the riches of the entire Bible can be searched out from Genesis to Revelation.

Faith is the sure, that by which we appropriate things

Of God's great power.		JOB, XLII.	Job submitteth himself to God.	
Before CHRIST cir. 1250.	23 Behold, ² he drinketh up a river, and hasteth not: he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth.	24 ² His taketh it with his eyes: his nose pierceth through snares.	Before CHRIST cir. 1250.	
² Heb. he approacheth. ² Or, Will any take him in his right, or, bore his nose with a pin? ch. 41. 1, 2.	CHAPTER XLII.			
² That is, a whale, or, a whalepoole. ² Ps. 104. 35. Is. 27. 1. ² Heb. which does dragout? ² Is. 27. 29.	Of God's great power in the Leviathan.			
	CANST thou draw out ⁴ a leviathan with an hook? or his tongue with a cord ⁴ which thou letteth down?			
	2 Canst thou ² put an hook into his nose? or bore his jaw through with a thorn?			
	3 Will he make many supplications unto thee? will he speak soft words unto thee?			
	4 Will he make a covenant with thee? wilt thou take him for a servant for ever?			
	5 Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?			
	6 Shall the companions make a ban- quet of him? shall they part him among the merchants?			
	7 Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons? or his head with fish spears?			
	8 Lay thine hand upon him, remem- ber the battle, do no more.			
	9 Behold, the hope of him is in vain: shall not one be cast down even at the sight of him?			
	10 None is so fierce that dare stir him up: who then is able to stand before me?			
² Rom. 11. 25. ² Ex. 10. 5. Deut. 10. 14. Ps. 34. 1. ² 50. 12. 1 Cor. 10. 26, 28.	11 ² Who hath prevented me, that I should repay him? ² whatsoever is un- der the whole heaven is mine.			
	12 I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his comely proportion.			
	13 Who can discover the face of his garment? or who can come to him ⁴ with his double bridle?			
² Or, much.	14 Who can open the doors of his face? his teeth are terrible round about.			
² Heb. among places of shields.	15 His ² scales are his pride, shut up together as with a close seal.			
	16 One is so near to another, that no air can come between them.			
	17 They are joined one to another, they stick together, that they cannot be sundered.			
	18 By his messings a light doth shine, and his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning.			
	19 Out of his mouth go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out.			
	20 Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as out of a seething pot or caldron.			
	21 His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth.			
² Heb. sorrow re- joiceth.	22 In his neck remaineth strength, and ⁴ sorrow is turned into joy before him.			
² Heb. The fallings.	23 ² The flakes of his flesh are joined together: they are firm in themselves; they cannot be moved.			
	24 His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone.			
	25 When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid: by reason of break- ings they purify themselves.			
	26 The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold: the spear, the dart, nor the ² habergeon.			
	27 He esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood.			
	28 The arrow cannot make him flee: slingstones are turned with him into stubble.			
	29 Darts are counted as stubble: he laugheth at the shaking of a spear.			
	30 ² Sharp stones are under him: he spreadeth sharp pointed things upon the mire.			
	31 He maketh the deep to boil like a pot: he maketh the sea like a pot of ointment.			
	32 He maketh a path to shine after him; one would think the deep to be hoary.			
	33 Upon earth there is not his like, ⁴ who is made without fear.			
	34 He beholdeth all high things: he is a king over all the children of pride.			
	CHAPTER XLIII.			
	1 Job submitteth himself unto God. 7 God, preferring Job's cause, maketh his friends submit themselves, and accepteth him. 10 He magnifieth and bleth Job, 16 Job's age and death.			
	THEN Job answered the LORD, and said,			
	2 I know that thou ² canst do every thing, and that ² no thought can be withholden from thee.			
	3 ² Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; ² things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.			
	4 Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: ⁴ I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.			
	5 I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.			
	6 Wherefore I ² abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.			
	7 And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath.			
	8 Therefore take unto you now ² seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for your- selves a burnt offering; and my ser- vant Job shall ² pray for you: for if ² him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job.			
	9 So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bil- dad the Shuhite and Zophar the Na-			

How the beg made a sound of Ps. 1 - how we see saw the difference.

*Many do know
the King's
Job;*

472
20, Job. ancient. 42: 1-6. 9. Epilogue. 42: 7-10

This photographic reproduction of his own forty-year Study Bible shows

Experience: The Psalms

The happiness of the godly.

PSALMS

The kingdom of Christ.

Before CHRIST
cir. 1500.

2 Heb. the
face of
Job.
Ps. 14. 7.
A 138. 1.
3 Heb.
what all
had been to
Job unto
the humble.
1 Is. 40. 2.
1 See
ch. 19. 13.

ch. 8. 11.
Jam. 5. 11.

1 Luke 20.
42.
Acts 1. 20.

mathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job.

10 And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.

11 Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold.

12 So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning:

for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand asses.

13 He had also seven sons and three daughters.

14 And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Keren-happuch.

15 And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.

16 After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations.

17 So Job died, being old and full of days.

Before CHRIST
cir. 1500.

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BOOK OF PSALMS.

PSALM I. Psalm

1 The happiness of the godly. 2 The unhappiness of the ungodly.

BLESSED is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

4 The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

6 For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

PSALM II. Psalm

1 The kingdom of Christ. 2 Kings are exhorted to accept it.

WHY do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,

3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

4 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision.

5 Then shall he speak unto them in

his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

11 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

PSALM III. Psalm

1 A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.

LORD, trouble me! many are they that rise up against me.

2 Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah.

3 But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.

4 I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah.

5 I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me.

3 Parts, 50 chapters, each. Part 1. David's Psalms

how faithfully he carried out his own principles in digging for Bible treasures.

DEDICATION

Dedicated to the Rev. Henry G. Weston, D.D., the late President of Crozer Theological Seminary, whose gracious and faithful letter to the then young pastor of the "Old Tenth," Philadelphia, did much to prompt the life-time study of the sacred text, the fruit of which, with prayerful deference, is given in this book.

"The blessing of the New Year be on you and yours. I cannot refrain from taking a moment to say how delighted I am at your adoption of the custom of devoting the first half-hour of the day to the reading of the Scripture. If I have attained anything in my long life, I think it is largely owing to my adoption of that habit at the commencement of my life as a pastor.

"That first half-hour determines very largely what a minister will be. Study the Bible: not commentaries, expositions, not even the lexicon and concordance; but just the Bible, saying, 'Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.' Commentators are well enough in their way; but give that half-hour to the Bible, without note or comment, and the Lord will greatly bless you. Christ's words at the beginning of His ministry ought to be our motto: 'Man shall not live by bread alone [made by the best bread-maker possible], but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.'

"Yours in Love of God's Word,

"HENRY G. WESTON."

YOUR STUDY BIBLE

Have You Learned How to Use It?

OF COURSE you have several copies of the Word. There is the Family Bible on the living-room table,—better, on a stand at the side of the breakfast table, where the master of the house can put his hand upon it for household worship. There is your pocket or satchel Bible that you carry with you wherever you go, to take out and peruse on the way, to verify the text in the sanctuary, or to lay upon your dresser as here and there you are domiciled for the night,—to use also if suddenly called upon to teach a Sunday-school class or give the Scripture thought in some prayer circle.

But this which we take up here is distinctively your *Study Bible*. It belongs to the inner sacristy of your private devotions, the library or study room where you search into the deep things of the Word and meditate upon its precepts, setting down from day to day your rich findings. It becomes marked and worn through the years. It tells your student researches, your spiritual journeys—it is your religious life story.

A bent and battered volume lies before me. With it I shall have much to do, and from it I shall be called upon to quote, as the Bible notes we follow together in this volume proceed. It is one pilgrim's record of forty years of perusal of the Scriptures, a Christian voyager's log-book of word searchings and heart experiences on the tossing billows of life's sea. This is the tenth time the writer has taken up this same Book for consecutive reading and exposition. It has been through not a little of stress and struggle. Like Paul, its ragged pages can say, "In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren" (2 Cor. 11:26). It went with the writer through the critical markings of postgraduate days; and subsequently through an eight years' course of Sunday-school studies, for teachers, rounding up the whole of the Book; it has trailed Moody and the Gordons

through luminous intimations of the Word; twice it has been across the water, and one reads significant English notes in the margin; twice indeed it has suffered virtual shipwreck and been recovered, almost alone of all the wreckage. Some of its pages have been lost, all are thumbled and marred and marked with numerous hints and references and interlineations, dim and hard to decipher now. The whole volume is in partial decrepitude and in danger of physical dissolution. But withal it is the choicest, most precious thing in all the possessions of the one who reverently handles it to-day—my Study Bible.

Take your Study Bible with you in all your studies of the Bible. Let it be the record of your own Biblical investigations, the treasure house of all your searchings and findings, the journal of all the glimpses and hints that come to you from various sources, thus carefully and effectively preserved. Transcribe to its pages your choicest thoughts, write down in a terse sentence the flashes of light that break out upon you as you read—let its spaces record your briefest notations and your sharpest analysis of its contents, so that at last you know your book at a glance and in a few moments can reproduce its trend of thought. In a word, make the book your own. "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses" (Josh. 1:3).

Here is your ordinary Scripture page before you. It should be in clear type, with reasonably wide margin, leaving room for annotation. The usual Teacher's Bible is suitable for this. Use the spaces, of course, economically and discriminatingly, the upper margins for hints and apt quotations; the lower margins for brief catchword analysis of the book and pointed directions as to the progress of thought; the side margins for exegetical notes and references and interpretations. At the beginning of each book and each chapter give your own most carefully worded designation of its theme and thought in the progress of Bible deed and doctrine. Thus *grip* your studies and findings, and attach them consecutively and practically to the Word itself. It is your working outfit, your ready kit of tools, your sword unsheathed.

The fly-leaf at the front of the Bible and the spaces of the lettering there can be helpfully utilized for key-words and key-texts and for general Biblical headlines and outlines.

Thus—Key-word to Old Testament (pick it out for yourself): "Come ye to the waters" (Isa. 55:1).

Key-word to the New Testament: "Come; for all things are now ready" (Luke 14:17).

My conversion text: "God is love" (1 John 4:8). (What is yours?)

Under the Scripture title of "Holy Bible," "1600 years, 66 books, 35 writers, *one* theme!"

Along with "Translated out of the Original Tongues"—"Exegesis is finding Jesus in the Word. Exposition is preaching Jesus from the Word. Look up—Lift up."

After "Appointed to be read in the Churches"—"Nothing *beyond* what is written, but *all* that is written."

Great words of the Bible—God, Man, Sin, Redemption, Justification, Sanctification, Glorification. In two words—Grace, Glory. In one word—Jesus!

ON THE OPENING PAGES

(As helps to all subsequent study.)

Biblical Eras:

Creation Era, Antediluvian, Patriarchal, Mosaic, Theocratic, Monarchical, Captivity, Return, Silence, Christ!

Biblical Epochs:

(Five hundred years each). Period of Adam, Jared, Enoch, Noah, Abram, Moses, David, Zerubbabel, Paul.

Pivotal Dates:

Abraham, 1920 B. C.; Moses, 1492 B. C.; Captive Israel, 722 B. C.; Judah, 606 B. C.; Cyrus' Decree of Return, 535 B. C.; Ezra's Return, 458 B. C.; Nehemiah, 445 B. C.; Malachi, Last of the Prophets, 397 B. C.; John the Baptist, Harbinger of the New, 26 A. D.

Comparisons:

"Old Testament—the night with its twinkling stars of prophecy."

"New Testament—the dawn. Night and dawn one full day."—*Saphir*.

"*In Novo Testamento patet. Quae in vetere latet.*"—*Augustine*.

"The New is in the Old contained,
The Old is by the New explained."

"Enfolded in the Old,
Unfolded in the New."—*Luther*.

In the Old Testament, the prodigal afar off, hungry and forlorn.

In the New, the prodigal returning home, the Father coming out to meet him.

Notes.—Christ quotes from twenty-two Old Testament books. In Matthew, 19 quotations; Mark, 15; Luke, 25; John, 11. In Hebrews, 85 quotations and allusions; Revelation, 245. Christ quotes the very passages most avoided by the destructive critics—the flood, Lot, manna, brazen serpent, Jonah.—*Moody.*

There are 127 fulfilments of prophecy in Christ's life and death. W. W. Clark finds 309 quotations from the Old in the New, and 528 allusions.

Number of chapters in the Bible, 1,189. Old, 929; New, 260.

Number of verses in the Bible, 31,058; words, 775,693.

Middle chapter of the Bible, Psalm 117; longest, Psalm 119; shortest, Psalm 117.

It is a curious fact that Ezra 7:21 contains all the letters of the alphabet (i and j interchangeable).

Middle verse of the Bible, Psalm 118:8; longest, Esther 8:9; shortest, John 11:35.

Longest book in Old Testament, Psalms—43,823 words.

Longest book in New Testament, Luke—25,654 words.

Symbols of the Word:

A mirror (Jas. 1:23-27).

A laver (Eph. 5:26, 27).

A lamp (Psa. 119:105).

A diet (Heb. 5:12).

A fire (Jer. 23:29).

A scalpel (Heb. 4:12).

A sword (Eph. 6:17).

A medicine (Psa. 119:25).

Seed of life (Jas. 1:18).

Honey and the honeycomb (Psa. 19:10).

How shall we read it? "Give me the plenary, verbal theory with all its difficulties rather than the doubt. I accept the difficulties and humbly wait for their solution. But while I wait I am standing on the rock."—*Bishop Ryle.*

AT THE BACK OF THE BOOK

Use the backs of the maps and the fly-leaves at the back of the volume. Use them for brief Bible studies and ready Scriptures for the Inquiry Room. Here, for example, are recorded on one of the pages of the volume a list of topics for cottage meetings, tried and proved:

1. The prayer-meeting in the house of Mark (Acts 12:12-17).
2. Cornelius and his house (Acts 10).
3. The Church in one room (Acts 2:41-47).
4. A cottage praise-meeting (Little Pentecost) (Acts 4:23-33).
5. A meeting at the Water Gate (Neh. 8).
6. A service at the riverside (Acts 16:13-15).

✓ Add to these at your pleasure.

On the back of the first map, that of the ancient world, we find looking out at us a number of prepared texts, for discouraged people. Have them at your finger's end when you visit the sick or troubled:

"When thou passest through the waters" (Isa. 43:2).

"In the time of trouble" (Psa. 27:5).

"All grace abound" (2 Cor. 9:8).

Three things we can *always* plead: The promises, the blood, the adoption.

The next map is Canaan. On the open back of this we find jotted down:

Helps for backsliders:

Christ and Peter. "Feed my sheep" (John 21:17).

"Hold fast, and repent" (Rev. 3:3).

"Able to keep you from falling" (Jude 24).

Backslider's Book (Hosea).

Backslider's prayer (Psalm 51).

A book of prayer for the needy:

Prodigal's prayer (Luke 15:18).

Publican's prayer (Luke 18:13).

Blind man's prayer (Luke 18:38).

Seeker's prayer (Mark 9:24).

Christ's own prayer for us (John 17).

"Take with you words [prepared words] and turn to the Lord" (Hosea 14:2).

On another map we find select texts for cavilers:

"The fool hath said" (Psa. 14:1).

"Except ye be converted" (Matt. 18:3).

"Lest darkness come upon you" (John 12:35).

On still another we find some texts for inquirers:

"Believe . . . saved" (Acts 16:31).

"Accepted in the beloved" (Eph. 1:6).

"Redemption through his blood" (Eph. 1:7).

"Cleansed" (1 John 1:7).

You are *permitted* to come (Acts 2:21).

You are *invited* to come (Matt. 11:28).

You are *entreated* to come (2 Cor. 5:20).

You are *commanded* to come (1 John 3:23).

You are *constrained* to come (Luke 14:23).

Truly and seriously *it is up to you!*

At the very last, for frequent perusal:

The things we *know*. (So much incertitude to-day):

"My Redeemer liveth" (Job 19:25).

"Whom I have believed" (not *in* whom) (2 Tim. 1:12).

"Manifested to take away our sins" (1 John 3:5).

"All things work together for good" (Rom. 8:28).

"We have a building of God" (2 Cor. 5:1).

"We have eternal life" (1 John 5:13).

"When he shall appear, we shall be like him" (1 John 3:2).

In the meantime and all along "He heareth us" (1 John 5:15).

Four things to ask for with the Bible open before us:

Spirit of assurance (1 John 3).

Spirit of wisdom (1 Cor. 2).

Spirit of joy (Phil. 2).

Spirit of Power (Eph. 1).

A leaf from Moody's Bible. Seven great changes:

1. Justification. A change of standing. Before God.

2. Repentance. A change of mind. About God.

3. Regeneration. A change of nature. From God.

4. Conversion. A change of life. For God.

5. Adoption. A change of family. In God.

6. Sanctification. A change of service. Unto God.

7. Glorification. A change of place. With God.

Final exhortation:

"So run, that ye may win" (1 Cor. 9:24). But you say, I can't run.

"Fly away and be at rest" (Psa. 55:6). Can't fly.

"Flee as a bird to your mountain" (Psa. 11:1). Can't flee.

"Come unto me, all ye that labor" (Matt. 11:28). Can't come.

"Turn you to the strong hold" (Zech. 9:12). Can't turn.

"Reach hither thy hand" (John 20:27). Can't reach.

"Look unto me, and be ye saved" (Isa. 45:22). Can't look.

Then just "be still and know" (Psa. 46:10). Only believe!

This is the Book that we propose to study. It is made up of sixty-six separate monographs of the Spirit. Many independent writers were moved of God to pen their communications. Each of these is conceived of, while contributory to the one great revelation of the Most High, as a special and distinct message from the skies, and as such each of them will be treated here. The Editor of The Sunday School Times has asked the writer to take up these books, one by one, and outline briefly their contents, dealing with them doctrinally, devotionally, practically, and evangelistically. That is, we shall ask: What does this message from the Heavens say about Jesus?—for he is the sum of doctrine. What does it say to me personally and spiritually,—how may I bring out this truth by lip and life? and how use it so as to lead others to Christ?

Along with this will be incorporated, more or less, the notes from the margin of my Study Bible. It is a simple but grave task, and the author of these lines responds with deference, but he is glad to give of what God in his grace has so kindly bestowed, through the years, if it will aid in the slightest way any other students of the Word. He counts it indeed one of the greatest privileges of his life thus to contribute even a very little bit toward the general knowledge and use of God's gift of his Word.

THE CALL OF THE WORD

The Evangelistic Note in the Books of the Bible

Naming the Books.—The Bible is one volume with its one word—*Jesus*. But each of its sixty-six books has its own message, which we do well to keep in mind. To help in the study of the Word, two name-analyses of the books of the Bible are to be given. The first is evangelistic in its prevailing thought, and is as follows. The other, evangelical or Christocentric, is given in the next section of this book.

"COME, FOR ALL THINGS ARE NOW READY."—
LUKE 14:17

HISTORICAL BOOKS

Genesis—Begin with God.
Exodus—Come out for God.
Leviticus—Get right with God.
Numbers—Get somewhere!
Deuteronomy—Stop and think (Selah).
Joshua—Take the land (Conquest).
Judges—Watch the borders (Discipline).
Ruth—Gather the grain (Restoration).
1 Samuel—Light the altar lamps.
2 Samuel—Call David—God's anointed.
1 Kings—Set the King on his throne.
2 Kings—Get the mantle.
1 Chronicles—Keep the royal line.
2 Chronicles—Honor the King.
Ezra—Repair God's house.
Nehemiah—Rebuild God's city.
Esther—Trust God's grace.

POETICAL BOOKS

Job—"Let Him have his way with you."
Psalms—Praise and pray (the saint on his knees).
Proverbs—Walk and work (the saint on his feet).
Ecclesiastes—"Fear God"—if you be wise.
Song of Solomon—Love Him with all your heart.

PROPHETICAL BOOKS

Isaiah—He is coming!
Jeremiah—Get ready with cleansing.

Lamentations—Get ready with weeping.
 Ezekiel—He will restore the Temple.
 Daniel—He will bring the Kingdom.
 Hosea—Return, therefore, O Israel.
 Joel—Sound the alarm.
 Amos—Drop the plumb line.
 Obadiah—Possess your possessions.
 Jonah—"Preach the preaching I bid thee."
 Micah—Look and live (watch tower prophecy).
 Nahum—Behold, the mountains quake!
 Habakkuk—But there's light ahead.
 Zephaniah—So sing, as you go.
 Haggai—Work as you go.
 Zechariah—"For the Lord shall yet comfort Zion."
 Malachi—Lo! His Messenger!

THE GOSPELS AND ACTS

Matthew—The Messiah is here!
 Mark—His wonderful works prove him.
 Luke—He is a friend of sinners.
 John—He is the Son of God!
 Acts—He is at God's right hand for us!

THE EPISTLES AND REVELATION

Romans—Come to him for righteousness.
 1 Corinthians—For all the gifts of his grace.
 2 Corinthians—For comfort and riches.
 Galatians—For freedom and power.
 Ephesians—For fulness of life.
 Philippians—Take him for joy.
 Colossians—"Ye are complete in him."
 1 Thessalonians—He is surely coming again!
 2 Thessalonians—But wait and work till he comes.
 1 Timothy—Guard the Gospel.
 2 Timothy—Guard the witness.
 Titus—Adorn the doctrine.
 Philemon—Be kind to all for his sake.
 Hebrews—He is our intercessor at the throne.
 James—Work out his salvation.
 1 Peter—"To you who believe he is precious."
 2 Peter—To you who believe he is gracious—and glorious.
 1 John—He is the life.
 2 John—He is the truth.
 3 John—He is the way.
 Jude—He is able to keep you from falling.
 Revelation—And to present you faultless at his appearing.

CHRIST IN THE WORD

The Messianic Clue to the Books of the Bible

Exegesis is finding Christ in the Word. Exposition is preaching Christ from the Word.

"Search the Scriptures . . . They are they which testify of Me"—Jesus.

OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis—Jesus, the Seed of the Woman, 3:15.

Exodus—Jesus, the Passover Lamb, 12:3.

Leviticus—Jesus, the Atoning Sacrifice, 16:33.

Numbers—Jesus, the Smitten Rock, 20:11. 1 Cor. 10:4.

Deuteronomy—Jesus, the Prophet Yet to Come, 18:15.

Joshua—Jesus, Captain of the Lord's Host, 5:14.

Judges—Jesus, Great Deliverer, 5:20.

Ruth—Jesus Celestial Kinsman, 4:14.

Samuel, Kings, Chronicles—Jesus, King! 2 Sam. 5:3;
Rev. 1:5, 6.

Ezra—Jesus, Restorer of the Temple, 7:27.

Nehemiah—Jesus, Restorer of the Nation, 2:5.

Esther—Jesus, Advocate and Propitiator, 4:16.

Job—Jesus, "My Redeemer," 19:25.

Psalms—Jesus, Our All in All, 3:3.

Proverbs—Jesus, Beginning of All, 1:7.

Ecclesiastes—Jesus, End of All, 12:13. 1 John 3:23.

Song of Solomon—Jesus, Center and Heart of All, 2:16.

Isaiah—Jesus, Prince of Peace, 2:4.

Jeremiah—Jesus, "Righteous Branch," 23:5.

Lamentations—Jesus, "Man of Sorrows," 3:1.

Ezekiel—Jesus, the "Tender Twig," 17:22.

Daniel—Jesus, "The Stone that Smote the Image," 2:35.

Hosea—Jesus, the "Dew unto Israel," 14:5.

Joel—Jesus, the "Hope of His People," 3:16.

Amos—Jesus, the Heavenly Husbandman, 9:9-15.

Obadiah—Jesus, Our Saviour, 1:17-21.

Jonah—Jesus, the Resurrection and the Life, 1:17.

Micah—Jesus, Witness against the Nations, 1:2, 3.

Nahum—Jesus, "A Stronghold in the Day of Trouble," 1:7.

Habakkuk—Jesus, "The Salvation of Thy People," 3:13.

Zephaniah—Jesus, "Mighty to Save," 3:17.

Haggai—Jesus, "The Desire of All Nations," 2:7.
 Zechariah—Jesus, "The Headstone" of the Corner, 4:7.
 Malachi—Jesus, "Sun of Righteousness," 4:2.

NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew—Jesus, The Promised Messiah, 1:21.
 Mark—Jesus, the "Righteous Servant," 1:10. Isa. 53:11.
 Luke—Jesus, Son of Man, 4:18.
 John—Jesus, Son of God, 1:34. 20:31.
 Acts—Jesus, Our Risen Lord, 1:2.
 Romans—Jesus, Our Righteousness, 1:17.
 1 Corinthians—Jesus, God's Grace to Us, 1:4.
 2 Corinthians—Jesus, God's Comfort for Us, 1:3.
 Galatians—Jesus, Our Liberty in the Gospel, 1:4. 5:1.
 Ephesians—Jesus, Fulness of Life, 1:3.
 Philippians—Jesus, Fulness of Joy, 4:4.
 Colossians—Jesus, Fulness of Power, 2:9, 10.
 1 Thessalonians—Jesus, the Coming One, 1:19.
 2 Thessalonians—Jesus, the Glorified, 1:10-12.
 1 Timothy—Jesus, Our Teacher, 1:3.
 2 Timothy—Jesus, Our Keeper, 1:12.
 Titus—Jesus, Our Portion Forever, 2:10-14.
 Philemon—Jesus, Our Master and Owner, 1:1.
 Hebrews—Jesus, Our High Priest and Intercessor, 3:1.
 James—Jesus, Our Pattern of Faith and Works, 2:1.
 1 Peter—Jesus, The Precious Corner Stone of Our Faith,
 2:6.
 2 Peter—Jesus, The Glorious Pinnacle of Our Hope, 3:13.
 1 John—Jesus, "The Life," 1:2.
 2 John—Jesus, "The Truth," 1:2, 3.
 3 John—Jesus, "The Way," 1:3, 4.
 Jude—Jesus, Preserver, 1:1.
 Revelation—Jesus, Conqueror! 1:18.

A PLAN FOR MARKING

EACH one should do his own Bible reading, and prayerfully and studiously make his own brief markings.

Use the margins of your Bible to write in notes such as these articles give, or discoveries of your own. Use the upper margins for quotations and hints. The lower margins for book outlines and directions. The side margins for exegetical notes and references. Name each book, and each chapter of each book. Make the Book your own. "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you" (Josh. 1:3). The following plan for marking is helpful:

At the top of the page—topical notes.

At the bottom—analytical notes.

At the side—exegetical notes.

CHAPTER 1

GENESIS

Book of Beginnings. Begin with God

THE gateway to the Interpreter's House and to the Palace Beautiful. This is, in a way, the greatest book in the world. It shows us in the first place two thousand years of authentic record otherwise vague and dim, if not entirely lost to us. And yet it is not distinctively history, but the religious interpretation of history. Two chapters suffice for the preparatory account, a kind of flashlight upon the wall, of the creation of the world and of man. All the rest is the Story of Redemption and God's way of bringing lost man back to himself. And it is here that Ussher's reasonable and fair chronology of the six thousand years of human history begins.

Genesis rewards the closest study. All the Gospel, including regeneration, sanctification, glorification, is here in sparkling intimation; and the book answers for us reassuringly the Great Questions of the soul, as to the eternity of God, the non-eternity of matter; Whence came man? Whence came sin? How to get back to God (Abel's sacrifice); How to please God (Abraham's faith); and, How to have power with God and man (Jacob's surrender).

OUTLINE (Indicate recurrently at bottom of pages)

1. Chapters 1 to 5. Adam to Noah.
2. Chapter 6 to 11. Noah to Abraham.
3. Chapters 12 to 26. Abraham to Jacob.
4. Chapters 27 to 36. Jacob to Joseph.
5. Chapters 37 to 50. Joseph.

FOR MARGINAL NOTES

Adam began with God, and fell through disobedience.
Abel began again with God by the Blood of Sacrifice.
Noah began with God by way of the Ark.
Abraham began with God when he builded altars.
All these made new beginnings for the race.

Seven Great Names:

Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph.
Bow with Abel at the Cross of the Slain Lamb.
Catch step with Enoch and walk with God.
Launch out with Noah on God's waters and fear Him.
Go forth with Abraham in pilgrim faith.
Dig wells with Isaac and get down to the divine resources.
Climb ladders with Jacob and see God.
Be clean and true like Joseph and live with God.
Make a book of Genesis and of new devotion in your own life.

Seven Great Historic Events:

Creation, Fall, Flood, Babel, Abraham's Call, Jacob's Flight, Joseph's Escape to Egypt.

Seven Messianic Hints:

Seed of the woman. Skins of slain beasts. Abel's blood sacrifice. The entrance into the body of the saving Ark. The offering up of Isaac. Jacob's ladder of intermediation. Joseph lifted from the pit to the throne.

FOR CHAPTER HEADINGS

Give each chapter a name of your own choosing, and blaze your way through Genesis.

Genesis: Beginning of sin; beginning of death; beginning of redemption.

"In the beginning God." Get back into the beginning with God. There find the morning stars still singing together, and the sons of God shouting for joy.

CHAPTER 2

EXODUS

THIS is the Book of Departure—the portico of the Pilgrimage leading to the King's banquet hall. We may so label it.

FOR MARGINAL NOTES

Each one will exercise his own discretion here; but as suggesting the process underneath the topical heading write, "Key-word—*Passover*; Key-text, 12:11, 'Ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord's passover.'"

At the top margin write "Come out for God! 'Out of Egypt have I called my son.' Come out, and keep on coming out. This is the lesson of Exodus. Messianic type, Jesus, the Passover Lamb."

On the lower margin write "Book analysis, Two Parts."

1. *Preparation for the Exodus.*

Preparation of Moses—Chapters 2 to 4.

Preparation of Pharaoh—Chapters 5 to 11.

Preparation of Israel—Chapters 12 and 13.

2. *The Exodus.*

Egypt to Sinai—Chapters 14 to 18.

At Sinai—Chapters 19 to 40.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

Take the side-margins for hints and helps, using fine, sharp pen.

1. *Bondage Chapter* (introductory). For example of side comments.

Verse 1. "These are the names"—now for the deeds.

Verse 8. "A new king over Egypt."

Verse 9. One God over all!—Just a brief note on the margin.

2. *Bulrush Chapter.* (Make your headings luminously picturesque.)

Verse 2. "Hid him three months." Long enough for a Moses.

Verse 9. "Take this child away, and nurse it *for me*." God's voice to the parent.

Verse 24. God's process with prayer: "Heard," "Remembered," "Looked," "Had respect," *i. e.*, Answered.

Note in the margin, and underscore in the text.

3. *Burning-Bush Chapter.*

Verses 1-4. Man's right attitude toward God: Kept the flock. Heard the voice. Obeyed the call.

Verse 11. "Who am I?"

Verse 12. "Certainly I." Two I's—man's and God's. "Not I, but Christ!"

Verse 18. Three days' journey—God's test to prove Pharaoh.

Verse 22. Borrowed jewels; rather *claimed*. God's test of Egypt.

4. *Moses' Rod Chapter.*

Verse 5. Miracles as credentials. "That they may believe that the Lord God hath appeared unto thee."

Verse 24. "The Lord met him, and sought to kill him." And he did kill him, and a new man came forth, equal to the task.

"Who hath not known the passion, cross, and travail of death cannot treat of this theme without injury to man or enmity to God."—*Luther*.

5. *Pharaoh's Hardness Chapter.*

Verse 2. "Neither will I let Israel go."

6. *God's Goodness Chapter.*

Verse 6. "I will bring you out."

7, 8, 9, 10, 11. *The Plagues*, the judgment side of God's mercies.

Beware the *wrath* of the *Lamb*!

These are but a few specimen notes. Enlarge at pleasure.

12, 13. *Israel made Ready*, by the Passover and Passage.

The Passover sealed them. The Passage of the Red Sea steeled them. They went out under the blood, marked, majestic men. They passed out through the flood, destined, directed, and determined men. God led them not by the easy way of Philistia, but by the flood and fire of Pihahiroth. He led them out and then shut the door behind them.

Chapter 13:17, 18. So dealeth he with his elect. Thank God! Saved and kept!

Now comes the Exodus proper. Chapters 14 to 18, Egypt to Sinai. Chapters 19 to 40. The sober pause at Sinai. Chapter 13 is Exodus Chapter. It is underscored in the Book. It should be kept accentuated in the life. "When I came forth out of Egypt" (v. 8). A red-letter date! When did you come out? Fix the day; celebrate it. Chapter 14 is Overthrow Chapter. "The Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea" (v. 27). Did you behold it as you came out? Look back, and see. Then for you also is Moses' Song Chapter (chap. 15). "The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation" (v. 2). Then for you also is Elim, with the "twelve springs of water and threescore and ten palm trees" (v. 27). Only those see the pillar of fire and cloud who have turned their backs on Egypt and have seen its angry hosts drowned in the wave.

Then naturally comes Manna Chapter (chap. 16) and the "angels' food" by the way. But you must be facing resolutely Canaanward. Egypt's garlic and Jordan's honey do not mix. One *or* the other, not one *and* the other. Now Rephidim and victory (chap. 17) follow hard apace, if only Moses' hand points skyward (v. 12), "And his hands were steady until the going down of the sun." Steady! men of God, steady! These are critical days.

Jethro's Chapter (chap. 18) means victory in soul-winning at home, as Rephidim means triumph abroad. It is ours only as we push ahead by way of Migdol and Elim. Keep to the Divine program: surrender, consecration, victory!

The silence of Sinai is written large in the last half of Exodus. It is *still* life, but God is in the stillness. It includes the Law, the Tabernacle, and the Priesthood—all of them profoundly significant and typical. Space limits forbid us to go into this, but we may refer, at least, to the Messianic intimations here, and throughout the book, in the Passover Lamb, the Burning Bush (fulfilled also in Israel and the church), the Manna, the Altar, the Holy of Holies, and Aaron's Priesthood. "See the Christ stand!"

CHAPTER 3

LEVITICUS

BOOK of Atonement, we call it. The Priest's Chapel in the King's Palace; Key-text, 16:33. *Get right with God*, it says to us; get right and stay right.

Get right, say the Offerings, and there are five of them: burnt offering, peace offering, meal offering, sin offering, and trespass offering.

Keep right, say the Feasts, and there are five of these also: Passover, Pentecost, Trumpets, Atonement, Tabernacles. These, the Sacrifices and the Festivals, give the two major divisions to the book. (All this, with other hints, we may briefly note in our margin.)

It is a timely book, for it gives us not only the key to the life of the soul and its holy walk, but sage lessons in hygiene and sanitation for the care of the body. And of this latter the Jewish people themselves with their vigor and longevity are sufficient evidence.

It is a divine book. The opening verse affords us the clue to the whole, "The Lord called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation." Leviticus is God speaking to us through the Tabernacle, itself an inspired revelation.

And it is a personal book. Of this the second verse gives intimation. "If any man of you bring an offering unto the Lord,"—this is the acceptable way to bring it; the way often as important as the gift. Have you an offering for the Lord? Then this book appeals to you, not otherwise.

Chapter 1—Burnt Offering: Dedication. Why first? Because for one thing surrender comes first. No one begins with God before he has yielded to God, and yielded all. "He shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord" (v. 3). We are to remember, too, that it was the most common sacrifice in that ancient temple. Israel was a given people and a giving people.

"Take my life and let it be

Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.—*Burnt Offering.*

Chapter 2—Meat or Meal Offering: Daily Devotion. We

come to him with our whole burnt offering; we keep on coming with our continual meat offering. And observe it is "fine flour" and "oil" and "frankincense" (v. 1). It is our very best, the gift of a life. But the slain offering comes first. Abel brought it; Cain did not.

Chapter 3—Peace Offering: Acknowledgment and Thanksgiving. It shall be of the herd or flock, for it is based on the initial and supreme sacrifice of the Lamb (v. 1). But it is of oneself, for "he shall lay his hand" upon it (v. 8). Only thus does it become "a sweet savor" (v. 5) unto the Lord.

Chapters 4 and 5—Sin Offering, Trespass Offering. The one general, the other particular; both expiatory. Though placed last, it is presumed and included in all that goes before. The only reason burnt, meat, or peace offerings can be made is that the blood of pardon has been anticipatively shed, and God is reconciled through the one offering of his Son, which every lesser offering typifies and presupposes. What we bring is our sin; what He brings is the offering and the atonement for sin. The heathen brings a sacrifice to his gods; the Christian accepts the sacrifice from his God.

As the first part of the book has to do with the offering and the offerers, so the last part of the book deals with the feasts and the feasters.

Chapter 23 tells of five great Festivals. The Sacrifices speak of the blood that saves, the Festivals of the food that sustains; both of God. They correspond respectively to the Cup of the Lord's Supper that reminds of Christ's death on the cross whereby we are reconciled, and the bread of the communion which witnesses to his life at the throne, whereby we live.

Passover and Pentecost, as earlier feasts, suggest the initial sacrifices of atonement and consecration; the autumn feasts, of Trumpets, Atonement and Tabernacles, hint, in turn, of sustained praise and mature devotion, the latter glimpsing also the glory that lies beyond and the joys of the Millennium.

We may speak here in a word of the significance of the Tabernacle that bulks so largely in Leviticus, as also in Exodus. The name of Jesus is written clear and plain in every part. The outer court points the way of approach, by the altar and the laver, which speak of the atoning blood and the sanctifying Spirit. The Holy Place pictures the hid life of the believer, till He come—illuminated by the sacred lamp, sustained by the heavenly bread and kept by the incense and the intercession of the holy altar. The holy of holies is beyond

the veil and is prophetic of things to come, when in final fulfilment of its mystic emblems our High Priest parts the curtains at last to come gloriously forth and bless all those that love and wait for his appearing. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

MARGINAL NOTES

"One John said, 'Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.' The other John said, 'The Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed them.' Sacrifice of God. Bread of God."—*A. J. Gordon.*

Christ's work on the cross justifies; Christ's work at the throne sanctifies. First the Blood, then the Oil. First Calvary, then Pentecost.

Jesus is seen in every sacrifice and feast of ancient Israel. There is no worship or devotion, anywhere, any time, where Christ does not appear.

CHAPTER 4

NUMBERS

BOOK of the March and the Roll Call, the Drill Plaza of the Wilderness. Fill out the margins with headlines and side notes suggestive of the Christian Journey. The Key-thought is: *Get Somewhere!* Key-text, 33:1, "These are the journeys," etc.

OUTLINE

1. From Sinai to Kadesh.
2. From Kadesh around about and back to Kadesh.
3. From Kadesh straight on to Canaan.

We may well place over the whole the words of Paul to the Christian Church, "Ye did run well; who did hinder you?" (Gal. 5:7.)

Oh, the lost years from Kadesh to Kadesh! From Sinai to Kadesh at the first was a swift, jubilant stride. Then came

doleful doubt and delay. Down into the wasting wilderness hesitant Israel plunged. Sadly Moses reminds them of it, "And the space in which we came from Kadesh-barnea until we were come over the brook Zered, was thirty and eight years, until all the generation of the men of war were wasted out from among the hosts." Wasted men. Wasted years. Wasted lives.

Then turn to Deuteronomy 1:2. (Self-condemning words.) "There are eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of Mount Seir unto Kadesh-barnea." Eleven days, and there was the land of promise. But they turn back; lost faith; lost grip; lost opportunity. Eleven days of progress; forty years of wandering. Journeying, journeying, and getting—nowhere!

This tells the tale of Numbers. Alas, it hints the record of many a Christian life, and, in part, the story of every life. We start out with a high hand in the flood and flush of our first love. Yonder lies the land of attainment and achievement. Then the giants; giants of opposition without; giants of fear within. Our faith fails; we forget God. Backward we turn, ruinously, riotously backward into the wilderness of half-belief, half-victory, whole despair. Numbers 33 is the pitiful log-book of this journey, "And they departed from Hazeroth, and pitched in Rithmah. And they departed from Rithmah, and pitched at Rimmon-parez. And they departed from Rimmon-parez, and pitched in Libnah," etc., to the end of the dismal chapter. Going, going, pitching, and departing, and never arriving. An endless circle of stagnation and ill-success. Who has not known it, who that has played with doubt? It is the way of the flesh—and of failure.

But there is another chapter here, and along this pathway we make our markings and set up our Ebenezer. Stones of hope and cheer. "Up to this point hath the Lord helped me." Thank God for the "Gospel of a Second Chance"! For after a while Israel moved onward again. Forth from the confines of Kadesh-barnea she started once more. This time with her face set resolutely toward the Land of Promise. The way is difficult, much harder than it was before, but faith has been renewed, discipline has done its work, and the army of God goes forth, face forward, conquering and to conquer.

Learn here, if you will, the lesson of God's Second Best. He offers the perfect way, we refuse it. It is gone forever. But he is kind, and he sets before us another way, a second best: it may be, a third, for His mercies are great. He brings us through, but, ah, how much we miss and how much we burden

ourselves by not taking the first and the best! It is the price of unfaith.

Mark well the picture. It is not only individual Christian experience in epitome, but the total career of the Christian Church, as it comes down through the centuries. The apostolic church launched lustily forth to take the world. Then came unfaith and the wilderness of the Dark Ages. But after a while, faith again, and the Reformation, and Missions, and Evangelism, and who knoweth the end, when our Second Joshua shall lead us across Jordan?

Underscore in this book the evangelistic call, "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel!" (10:29). The appeal of God's marching hosts to the world about. The Ark of the Covenant is the Word of God in the midst; the sound of the Silver Trumpet is the witness of a faithful prophet, based upon that Word. The Pillar of Fire and of Cloud is the comfort and guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Tabernacle and its ordinances mark the worship of the sanctuary, with Christ "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession" giving gracious significance and efficiency to the whole. We are erring mortals; we make mistakes and wander far. But these are our heavenly attendants and monitors. Who does not need them? Who can make progress without them? "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you." Come, join our band and go with us. This is the ceaseless appeal of a loyal evangelistic church.

CHAPTER 5

DEUTERONOMY

BOOK of Remembrance. The Grand Review of the Pilgrimage. Key-word: "*Observe to do.*" Key-text, 12:1.

It is a kind of "Selah" for the heavenward journey. *Stop and think*, it says to us. And then right on, right on to the work!

The book is made up of three great discourses of Moses, the man of God. Chapters 1 to 4, Looking Back; chapters 5 to

26, Looking Up; chapters 27 to 33, Looking Out. Reminiscent; Historical; Prophetical; and Practical. What better model for preaching, or for practicing?

Mark these four wonderful memorial chapters that usher in the message. 1. Kadesh Chapter; 2. Seir Chapter; 3. Bashan Chapter; 4. Pisgah Chapter. Climb and sing—if you know how. It is not easy, but with God's grace it can be done.

Underscored verses—Verse 9. "Because the Lord hated us" (1:27). Wrong judgment. "Ye have compassed this mountain long enough" (2:3). Move on! "Lest thou forget" (4:9). The Use of the Word. A hint in the margin is sufficient.

Chapter 6 is Hinge Chapter. Everything turns upon it. "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord." The first note of the Gospel; Bell. Ring it out. And then live it out. This is the overcoming chapter of the Word. Mark its growth, as follows:

A rich life: "The land that floweth with milk and honey" (v. 3). *A gifted life*: "To give thee great and goodly cities" (v. 10). *A holy life*: "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him" (v. 13). *A conquering life*: "To cast out all thine enemies from before thee" (v. 19). *An established life*: "And he brought us out . . . that he might bring us in" (v. 23). Out of Egypt into Canaan. *A sure life*: "And it [he] shall be our righteousness" (v. 25). Find Jesus all the way. "Rest and be thankful." This is holy ground. Christ trod it before us. It is from this one chapter, known to every son of Israel, that he twice quotes (vs. 13-16) in his temptation in the Wilderness. And Satan fled. It is the sword of the Spirit. Try it to-day, in His name, and be a victor in the fight.

It is to be remembered that these discourses were spoken to those who were not at Sinai. Therefore every loyal Israelite pondered on them, learned them by heart. Can we do better? Not if we ourselves want a bit of heaven here below. This is the definite promise, "As the days of heaven upon earth" (11:21). For a taste of heaven get familiar with Deuteronomy. Catch step with Moses and march straight ahead by way of the Honey-land.

"Bredren," said the colored man at Col. Clark's Mission, "when I gets to de gates of Heben, if dey shuts me out, I'll say, 'Anyhow, I had a good time gettin' here.'"

Why not?

"We're traveling through Immanuel's Land,
To fairer worlds on high."

Book of Moses; Book of God. But who wrote this last chapter, recording Moses' death? What matters it? Who wrote the biographical preface of "Pilgrim's Progress"? It is John Bunyan's matchless work still. Criticism has its place. The writer has a Bible scored with the critical markings of post-graduate days, when he went along the winding ways, wondrous for twists and turns, of the documentary hypothesis with its composite authorship of the Pentateuch. But, after all, one does not think to be wiser than Daniel. "As it is written in the law of Moses" (Dan. 9:13). And when Jesus himself took the Scriptures in hand, he began "at Moses and all the prophets" (Luke 24:27). Shall we get anywhere with God's Word unless we begin right? And the book of Moses makes a pretty good beginning.

Comparative religion also has its place, and the study of ancient literature. What use did Moses make of tradition? It is an interesting study; we find the libraries full of it; and who does not wish to know all that is being said on so great a theme as the Bible and its contributory sources? But what of it all? Simply this: There are other ancient cults, other ancient religions. There are curious resemblances to the Biblical narrative here and there, though generally very crude and quite racial. Did Moses borrow from them, as alleged? By no means. There was an original tradition of first things, the common possession of mankind, coming down through the centuries. Each civilization adopted and made more or less intelligent, more or less crass, use of this prior data. To Moses it was given under the inspiration of God to cull and sift all such early material, and moved of the Holy Ghost, to give us the cleansed and chastened story of the past in such a way as that the children of men in all climes and all ages might have the truth and might read aright of God's hand with this old world in the beginning of days.

CHAPTER 6

JOSHUA

THIS is the Book of Conquest, or the Battlefield of the Canaan Inheritance. It hints "The good fight of faith" in every Christian life. Key-text, "Possess the land, which the Lord your God giveth" (1:11). God's to give; ours to possess.

There are two parts—Given and Taken. Taken and occupied, *i. e.*, I. Conquest; II. Settlement. These correspond respectively, in a way, to conversion and sanctification in Christian experience.

Joshua is to the Pentateuch what Acts is to the Gospels. It is grace at work, the principles of godliness in their application and fulfilment. Evangelically it requires Moses and Joshua together to present to us typically the finished work of Christ. Moses points to the Jesus of Bethlehem and Calvary in His redemptive mission on earth. Joshua emphasizes more particularly the Christ at God's right hand, the Christ of the Holy Ghost, with his victorious mediation at the throne. Altogether it pictures the conquering life of the Christian, finally consummated in the Adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies.

I. Conquest. Here was wisdom. 1. Conquest of the Interior (chapters 1 to 9, Jericho). 2. Conquest of the South (10, The Five Kings). 3. Conquest of the North (11, Merom). First the center, then the outlying parts. First the heart, then the whole life, for "out of the heart are the issues of life."

II. Settlement. Here also is wisdom. 1. East of Jordan (13, Two and one-half tribes). 2. West of Jordan (14-17, Judah, Ephraim, and half Manasseh). 3. The rest of the land (18, Benjamin and the remaining tribes). Pre-empt and occupy as you go. Heart, hand, foot, every imagination brought, at last, to the obedience of Christ.

Two great texts speak it:

Set your foot down. "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses" (1:3). *Take it all.* "From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates,

all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast" (1:4).

Not till Solomon's day, a half millennium later, was this fully realized (2 Chron. 9:26), but it was coming all the time. Queen Victoria was made Empress of India long before her royal grandson actually occupied all its borders.

There is a twofold process of Sanctification. I saw Evan Hopkins illustrate it luminously at Keswick. "Here is my hand. It is crippled and atrophied. The physician lays his finger on the joint. Click! it is back in place. This is the instantaneous work. But now, the members properly articulated, the blood flows down into all the parts, and the hand begins to fill out and presently do its normal work." This is progressive. But the one involves the other. Both are of God. We are saved; we are being saved.

This book is rich in texts for marking. Just a hint in the margin is sufficient. It tells the overcoming life of the consecrated Christian; young believers ought especially to search and follow them out.

Be on the move—no matter what happens. "Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan" (1:2). *Take the sword*. "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth" (1:8). *Go in for a full life*. "Go in to possess the land, which the Lord your God giveth you to possess it" (1:11).

The Lord's Minute Men. "All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go" (1:6).

Hide under the Blood. "And she bound the scarlet line in the window" (2:21). (There are hints of redemption from every casement window of the Word.)

Go clean over. "Until all the people were passed clean over Jordan" (3:17). *Stand by your Pastor*. "The Lord magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel" (4:14).

Bend to the great Leader. "And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship" (5:14). (Here Joshua received Knighthood and Commission.) *Put the first thing first*. "And seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord went on continually" (6:13). Seven trumpets of a ministry that breaks down the walls and brings things to pass—Ruin by the Fall! Redemption by the Blood! Regeneration by the Spirit! Believe! Repent! Accept! Obey!

Face Front! "O Lord, what shall I say when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies?" (7:8.)

Beware of the wedge of gold. "There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel" (7:13).

Put it through. "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon" (10:12). (Ordinary things come to a standstill when God's work is on. Oh, for another great Revival!)

Endure hardness as good soldiers. "Now therefore give me this mountain" (14:12).

Believe the Word of God. "Not one thing hath failed" (23:14). Certitude! *Start right.* "Choose you this day whom ye will serve" (24:15). It is all summed up at 1 Timothy 6:12, "Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life," which does not mean fight *till* you lay hold, but fight by laying hold. Faith is the Victory, and Christ is the Victor.

CHAPTER 7

JUDGES

BOOK of Declension, we must call it, the Dark Ages of the Israelitish people. Its Key-word, *Forsook* (2:13); its Key-thought, *Forsaken* (2:23). Deny God, and he will deny you.

Ingersoll spoke much of "the liberty of man, woman and child." A godless liberty—here you have it. "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (17:6). Anarchy! Ruin! It begins with compromise, it ends with confusion. So with every unregulated, undeveloped life.

Chapter 1 is Failure Chapter. "Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites." "Neither did Zebulum drive out the inhabitants." "Neither did Asher drive out the inhabitants." "Neither did," six times in succession. A series of disobediences. And so naturally, naturally and direfully, chapter two is Ichabod chapter. God gave them up for a season to their own devisings. "Ye have not obeyed my voice." "Wherefore they shall be as thorns in your sides" (vs. 2, 3). Verily we create our own judgments and are our own executioners.

It is here in this book and in these days of declension that the destructive critics would have the history of Israel begin—

a wild, lawless, nomadic people, developing at last into higher civilization. It is a pretty theory, but does not comport with either fact or philosophy. Failure to keep the law does not prove non-existence of law, any more than the waywardness and wretchedness of much of to-day's worldly living annihilates the Ten Commandments or removes the words of Christ from our ethical foundations. Men grovel, at the very foot of Sinai. This chapter teaches it, the natural course of the human—it is downward.

Just as naturally, but, thank God, with a touch of the supernatural, chapter three is Discipline Chapter. "Now these are the nations which the Lord left to prove Israel" (v. 1). God uses the fruits of our unfaith to prove us. He does not forget his covenant (no merit to us), and he lets our very weaknesses, our guilty weaknesses, drive us back to him.

Very graciously, therefore, chapter four breaks upon us as Deliverance Chapter, even as Deborah sings, "Up; for this is the day in which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thine hand" (v. 14). And this introduces to us the happy note of the book, that indeed runs all the way through: Defeat on man's part; deliverance on God's part. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Rom. 5:20). Look up, repent, and trust the God of heaven.

We are ready now for the main trend of the book: Degeneracy, Return, Deliverance! Degeneracy, Return, Deliverance! So from first to last. Our sins they are many, but we are his people, and "his mercy endureth forever."

We have in Judges, in the main, seven great oppressions and seven great deliverances:

1. Mesopotamian oppression. Othniel raised up as a deliverer (3:9).

2. Moabite oppression, with Ehud as deliverer (3:15).

3. First Philistine oppression. Shamgar, the deliverer (3:31).

4. Canaanite oppression, with Deborah and Barak as deliverers (chaps. 4, 5).

5. Midianite oppression. Gideon raised up to deliverer, with other minor judges following (chaps. 6-10).

6. Ammonite oppression. Jephthah, deliverer (11:32).

7. Second Philistine oppression, with Samson as the wonderful deliverer (chaps. 13 and on).

The last chapter intimates that they had lost the way to God's house, so low had they sunk. No chance to exalt man

here. Faithlessness, failure, forfeiture. But God loves his own. That is the only thing that saves us—that and our readiness to be saved. It is the history of the church through the ages, with Luther, Knox, Wesley as deliverers. It is the biography of the Christian in the common run of lives. God gives us great grace and sets before us a great and gracious task. Then come forgetfulness of God and worldly conformity, which bring defeat and loss. But, thank God, also, with penitence, rescue from loss, and restoration to God's favor. The career of God's people is full of wanderings and returnings, lapses and redemptions, captivities and deliverances. And after a while for his church, and all the while for the true, consecrated, unshaken believer, Christ, the final judge and full deliverer, the gracious, regnant, overcoming Jesus. "Come, great Deliverer, come!"

CHAPTER 8

RUTH

Key-thought: Back to Bethlehem!

Key-word: "Returned" (1:22)

WE HAVE here a kind of postscript to Judges. And like most postscripts, a word of affection. This is what it says, *He loves you still!* It is a sweet, winsome love story, this book of Ruth, and it gets its origin and instigation in the one great love-note that runs through the whole Word, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Three Parts:

1. God calls the wanderer back—Naomi.
2. God gathers the lost ones in—Ruth.
3. God seals His own into Himself—Boaz.

To us this idyl from the days of old is like a cage full of sweet-singing birds.

Evangelistically, it tells the anxious soul how to find rest

and home. Ruth means *satisfied*, and we read again how the soul is dissatisfied and restless till it rests in Him. Then peace and rest!

The chapters of the book point the way.

1. In the Far Country; yearning for rest.
2. In the Field; facing homeward, seeking rest.
3. At the Threshold; received and welcomed.
4. Within the Gates; chosen and established.

Doctrinally, it is the gracious abrogation of Deuteronomy 23:3, "An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord." Behold Ruth the Moabitess, by the grace of God, brought in and blessed as the favored ancestress of the coming Christ—the hope of Jew and Gentile alike.

Evangelically, it points to the efficient work of Jesus, our heavenly Boaz, meaning *strength*, who meets us at the gates as both *Kin* and *King*, one with us that he may lift us up to be one with Him—accepted in the Beloved."

Dispensationally, it speaks the fulness of Christ's redemption when the child of earth, at last, gets home to God, pardoned, purchased, placed!

"Sit still, my daughter," said Naomi, "until thou know how the matter will fall; for the man will not be in rest, until we have *finished* the thing this day" (3:18). So cried Paul in *Philippians* 1:6, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will *perform* it until the day of Jesus Christ." Behold the measures of barley already yours. What Christ *has* done in us is pledge and foretaste of what He *will* do for us—when he meets us at the gates; the blessed hope!

And *practically*, a word of comfort for the backslidden Christian. See Naomi coming back from Moab to Bethlehem, from hunger and loneliness, which is the curse and whip that drives the wandering disciple home to bread and shelter, with which God ever awaits his erring ones who return to Him. "Bitter," she calls herself (Mara), but *sweet* was her name (Naomi); and sweet indeed is the portion of the Christian when he gets back to God.

"The exile is at Home,
O nights and days of tears,
O longings not to roam,
O sin, and doubts and fears;
What matters now grief's downcast day
The King has wiped those tears away!"

MARKED TEXTS

1:6: "She had heard in the country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread." God brings bread with Him when he comes to visit his people.

1:22: "And they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of the barley harvest." Revival! A good text with which to begin meetings or open a pastorate.

2:6: "It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab." The attitude of blessing—God sees it. "To get to Bethlehem you must leave Moab.—*Moody*. Then presently "under His wing" (2:12).

3:15: "Bring the vail [apron] that thou hast upon thee, and *hold* it. And . . . he measured six measures of barley."

"Count your blessings, name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done."

4:14: "Blessed be the Lord, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman." The margin says *redeemer*. Thy redeemer awaits thee; "seek and find." Scofield's luminous chapter headings of this book are: 1. Ruth deciding; 2. Ruth serving; 3. Ruth resting; 4. Ruth rewarded.

MARGINAL NOTES

Glean reverently in earth's barely fields, and find the everlasting God. This the ineffable reward.

Add a Ruth postscript to the living epistle of your life; make Jesus your Lord, and rest in him!

CHAPTER 9

1 SAMUEL

Key-thought: Chosen King

Key-text: "Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen" (12:13)

WE ENTER here upon the King Books. Broadly outlined:

- 1 Samuel. Man's Choice: Saul.
- 2 Samuel. God's Choice: David.
- 1 Kings. Solomon and Israel.
- 2 Kings. Israel's Kings (Civil Record).
- 1 Chronicles. Solomon and the Temple.
- 2 Chronicles. The Kings and the Temple (Religious Record).

Note the books of Kings as national and prophetic; the books of Chronicles, ecclesiastical and priestly.

Devotional thought: Set the King on his Throne.

Three characters appear in First and Second Samuel: Samuel, the king-maker; Saul, the king chosen; David, the king proved.

1. *The Career of Samuel.* Chapters 1 to 8. (1) His Birth. (2) His Call. (3) His Administration. Samuel is the last judge under the old Theocracy. He ruled well, but the people factiously demanded a king like unto the nations around them: and a king is given them. It is the principle again of God's first and second Best. He gives us always the *best we will take*, "for his mercy endureth for ever." Human Free Agency is ours; but we may well tremble at its possibilities. Divine Sovereignty also, and we tremble again; but rejoice with trembling.

Mark one or two Scriptures here. "And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh" (3:21); a great revival text. Shiloh revisited! For Shiloh bereft, read Judges (21:19-21). A place of feasting and dancing. What wrought the change from emptiness to blessing? Three things: 1. A praying mother (chap. 1); 2. A chastened people (chap. 2); 3. A faithful prophet (chap. 3). These are the beginnings of every great awakening.

Chapter 7 is Mizpeh Chapter. "And Samuel *judged* the people in Mizpeh" (v. 6), place of self-devotement, the only place where the man of God can do anything with the people of God. Come together, humbly, devotedly: and give him a chance! A good conquest text.

"And the men of Israel . . . smote them, until they came under Beth-car" (v. 11). All the way to Beth-car! clean out the Philistines and make the border safe.

2. *The Career of Saul*: His rise (chaps. 9 to 15); his fall (chaps. 16 to 31).

No man had a greater opportunity than Saul. No man ever made a greater failure. He was not right with God: therefore not right anywhere!

Observe Saul's fivefold investiture:

1. His providential ordination (9:3-20). He went with a bridle and came back with a scepter.

2. His prophetic ordination (10:1). He had Samuel for friend and tutor. What an advantage! But, alas, an advantage thrown away. We often do the same to-day.

3. His spiritual ordination. "The Spirit of God came upon him" (10:10). Presently to be *grieved*; and ultimately *quenched*. The Spirit to be retained and enjoyed needs to be cherished and obeyed.

4. His popular ordination. "And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king!" (10:24).

5. His triumphant ordination in battle (Gilgal; 11:15). Saul was a man of marvelous gifts and privileges. And now note how one may have under God a good beginning, but, if he grow heady and neglect the Spirit, a sad ending.

Observe the five steps of Saul's failure and forfeiture:

1. His presumption at God's altar (13:13).

2. His captiousness and cruelty with Jonathan (14:44).

3. His rebellion and disobedience in the matter of Amalek (15:23).

4. His jealousy and hatred of David, the Lord's elect (18:29).

5. His impiety and apostasy in appealing to the witch of Endor (28:7). Then came Gilboa and discomfiture. *Facilis descensus averno*.

The surrendered life is the only safe and truly successful life.

MARGINAL NOTES

"We add to our spiritual stature not by 'taking thought' but by *taking thoughts*," i. e., God's thoughts.—*A. J. Gordon*.

Honor God and be honored of God.

A text for the Praying Band: "And there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched" (10:26). Give us more such!

Resorting to unchristian sources for our theology: "But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines to sharpen every one his share, and his coulter, and his ax, and his mattock" (13:20). Dangerous business.

Abigail is the Lydia of the Old Testament (25:32). She gave prompt recognition and welcome to the Lord's anointed.

The witch of Endor represents a revival gotten up; the prophet Samuel a revival gotten down.

"Lord, give me the opportunity to honor thee, and give me a heart to embrace the opportunities."—*Edward N. Kirk*.

Light the Altar lamps and keep them burning.

Let high privileges prompt to high living.

Fulfill God's will—and be king!

Have your own way—and fail!

CHAPTER 10

2 SAMUEL

Call David. Set the True King on His Throne

Key-text: "And they anointed David king over Israel" (5:3)

OF THE three marked personages of this period, Samuel, Saul, and David, the last-named now occupies the field of view. David comes to his own.

1. *David's Preparation and Discipline*: This is found in the latter part of 1 Samuel. (1) His call from the sheepfold. (2) His victory over Goliath. (3) His persecution by Saul. These were the testing days.

2. *David's Supremacy and Rule*, the substance of 2 Samuel. Its Key-thought—David made king. Outline: Made king

over Judah (chaps. 1 to 4). Made king over all Israel (chaps. 5 to 24). Devotional appeal—Make Jesus king. First, over the heart; second, over all the life. So, in a way, fulfil the prayer, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”

Find here the blessedness of the life that recognizes the Lord's anointed and puts the true King on the throne. Such a life is *sheltered*. “Thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel” (5:2). Such a life is *nurtured*. “Thou shalt feed my people Israel” (5:2). Such a life is *victorious*, with Christ's own victory. “And thou shalt be a captain [file-leader] over Israel” (5:2).

Jesus said, “Follow me.” That means when obeyed, shielded, shepherded, sure! The secret of the Given life, which is the Gifted life.

MARGINAL NOTES

David was “a man after God's own heart,” not because of boasted perfections, but because of confessed imperfections. He hid from self in God.

Read his brief autobiography (23:1-5): (1) “The spirit of the Lord spake *by* me.” (2) “The Rock of Israel spake *to* me.” (3) The God of Israel spake *for* me. “He hath made me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.” Bend like David to God, and be yourself, like David, “A man after God's own heart.”

A sincere man is like a clean glass, whose glory it is not to be seen but to be seen *through*.

Saul was always man's king; David, God's.

There is a bell in every man's heart that rings true. Respond to it and be led; refuse it and be lost. David obeyed; Saul disobeyed.

Psalms 24 (“Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and the King of glory shall come in”) is called “a Psalm of David,” but it is rather of David's divine Lord. “Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory!” And where now is David? Hidden like you and me, in the folds of his garment—when the King comes in!

MARKED TEXTS

“He bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the bow” (1:18). We need such instruction to-day, both for song and for battle.

"There the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul [omitting the obscuring italics], not anointed with oil" (1:21). The fatal error with Saul, as with many others oft chosen of men, is an *unanointed* shield.

"And they set the ark of God upon a new cart" (6:3). Were they thinking as much of the old ark as of the "new cart"? Perez-uzzah came swift and soon.

"If he commit iniquity [Messianic], I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men" (7:14). May we not rather say, if he *assume* iniquity? See Hebrew. Bishop Horsley translates it, "If sin be laid upon him" (cf. Isa. 53).

Note also in this connection, "Thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come." And is this the manner of man, O Lord God? (7:19.) Bishop Horsley again translates with Christly intimations, "Thou hast regarded me in the matter of *the Man that is to come.*"

"So Absalom dwelt two full years in Jerusalem, and saw not the king's face" (14:28). Have we any such Christians to-day—utterly *apart* from Him?

"Surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be" (15:21). Thank God for this type of Christian, also—wholly *with* Him.

"Now therefore why speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?" (19:12). The sad and hopeless silence of some pulpits to-day. God pity us—and the people!

CHAPTER 11

1 KINGS

"God Save the King!" The Splendid Reign of Solomon

HE STANDS out most prominently here. But it was splendor without surrender. And as with Saul, Solomon's life had its dismal anti-climax.

It was the flesh prevailing over the Spirit, and it sloped to the dust. Thus always with incomplete devotion.

Key-text: "His heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father" (11:4).

OUTLINE

1. Prosperity (chaps. 1-10).
2. Decline (chaps. 11-22).

Yet Solomon was a magnificent king, his throne the noblest the world had ever seen, his life fraught with marvelous significance.

There are, in fact, two men here, as in all of us.

1. *The Great and Good Solomon.*

Observe his splendid endowments:

His name meant peace, telling of rest and repose after David's disquieted reign.

His rearing was under the pious and prudent Nathan, who gave him the endearing title, Jedidiah, *God's darling* (2 Sam. 12:25).

His investiture was clear and pronounced. All the city rang with the glad cry, "Solomon sitteth on the throne of the kingdom!" (1:46).

His charge from his father David was radiantly full of promise and blessing.

His choice of wisdom from on high was of divine inspiration and reassuring to all (chap. 3).

His cabinet of helpers was sagaciously selected and such as no king of Israel ever had before or after (chap. 4).

The temple that he builded was a thing of beauty and seemed destined to be a joy forever, its dedication the noblest service of praise and prayer ever lifted to God (chaps. 6 to 8).

The vision of God, given him at the outset of his career, was the most gracious epiphany of the divine presence and power ever given to man since Jehovah spake to Moses on the mount (chap. 9).

The kingdom he established realized at last after more than four hundred years the broad and generous dimensions outlined to Joshua at the crossing of Jordan (Josh. 1:4; 1 Kings 4:21).

The wealth and majesty of his royal house fairly took away the breath of the queen of Sheba. "There was no more spirit [Hebrew, *breath*] in her" (10:5).

His marvelous beauty of person is hinted in Psalm 45.

His ardent affection is seen in the Songs of Solomon. He was a great and glorious king. But note now the gloomy marks of his decline.

2. *The Weak and Erring Solomon.*

Unlike his father David, his hand was cruel and murderous toward his brother Adonijah (2:25).

Too much like Saul, his heart was lifted up in pride, forgetting the robust simplicity of his forbears (10:18-29).

Finally, led astray by his heathen wives, his life and conduct practically relapsed into idolatry, copying after the nations about him (chap. 11). "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

Indeed, it is to be doubted whether Solomon's wisdom as he displayed it was anything like spiritual wisdom. The book of Ecclesiastes, with its prevalent note of dismay, if not despair, is a virtual confession of it. He had not the meek and lowly heart at peace with God, at least till in the end he renounced all. He is an early but conspicuous example of that man described in Matthew 12:43-45, a house swept and garnished, but unoccupied of God, into which, as if invited by its moral emptiness, seven other spirits, evil and debasing, entered and—the last state of that man is worse than the first! Privileges unused are privileges abused. A heart untenanted and unoccupied of God is "*a house to let*" to all the world and the evil spirits thereof.

MARGINAL NOTES

Study the sweep and solace of Solomon's wonderful prayer (chap. 8).

John Peddie said, "I look out on my congregation as a company of needy souls: and then I just take their wants all up to God."

The queen of Sheba is the world looking on. Does she see anything to marvel at in the superior gifts and graces of God's crowned ones to-day?

"While sin is yet tempting us it is loved: when done it is loathed."—*Maclaren*.

"Pleasure won by sin is peace lost."—*Maclaren*.

The kings of Israel took their cue from mixed judges rather than from straight Joshua.

"By every wilful sin we commit we give room to the devil."—*Charles Kingsley*.

"Ask it, will it: and thou shalt be pure."—*Farrar*.

Elijah the prophet was the power behind the throne in this period—the true king of Israel.

MARKED TEXTS

"Ask what I shall give thee" (3:5). The high privilege of youth. Each one's life tells what he has asked.

"And upon the tops of the pillars was lily work" (7:22). Strength and beauty, twin graces of the Christian life.

"The thing of a day in his day" (8:59, margin). A motto for the faithful.

"My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins" (12:10). Splendid rhetoric—ruinous practise.

"Make me thereof a little cake first" (17:13). The priority of God's portion.

"As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak."

A loyal pulpit's Declaration of Independence, "The battle cry of the Reformers" (22:14), the words of God's faithful prophet, Micaiah.

CHAPTER 12

2 KINGS

Book of Dispersion. The Kingdom of Israel in Decline

Symbol: A clock run down. *Key-text:* "In those days the Lord began to cut Israel short" (10:32). *Key-thought:* The folly of disobedience: reject, and be rejected.

OUTLINE

1. Israel's Rejection and Dispersion (chaps. 1 to 17).
2. Judah's Rejection and Dispersion (chaps. 18 to 25).

In First Kings the Kingdom of Israel, leavened with pride and arrogance, falls apart. In Second Kings, sinning yet more against God it goes into captivity. Surely the way of the transgressor is hard. The history of the Jewish church is a record of God's dealings with recreant children: punitive, indeed, but kindly; for He loves them still.

Second Kings opens with the glorious shout, "The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha!" (2:15). It closes with the dismal plaint and plight of Jehoiachin, under his meager pittance from the king of Babylon (25:36); it starts out with a double portion from the King of heaven; it ends with a half allowance from the prince of earth. It is better to stay with Jehovah.

The New Testament Church, in its turn, began with the full effusion of Pentecost. Have we advanced, or declined? Thank God, the end is not yet. It will be glorious at last when the King appears, and *the feast is spread*.

The secret of all this degeneracy and decay is found in 3:2. "And he wrought evil in the sight of the Lord." Be loyal and true. It does not pay to do evil. It is better to be good.

Here is the roster of the kings, a pitiful, dwindling procession: *Israel*—Jeroboam, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, Joram, Jehu, Jehoahaz, Jehoash, Jeroboam II, Zachariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, Hoshea. Then night and negation for the Ten Tribes (about 721 B. C.). *Judah*—Rehoboam, Abijam, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, Ahaziah, Athaliah, Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah. Then the burden and discipline of the brick-kiln for Judah (586 B. C.).

The moving figures and saving factors of those days were the prophets Elijah and Elisha.

Elijah stalks forth abruptly like the heroes of the old French romance, out of a hole in the wall. "And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I *stand*" (1 Kings 17:1). And there he stood, a rock for God, through all the weak vacillations of Israel. His name means *Jehovah my God*.

Elisha is the champion of the Most High, more particularly in 2 Kings. He comes upon the scene at 1 Kings 19:19. "So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him." That was a great find for Israel. Where are those oxen ripping up the soil to-day? We need them, and the hand upon the plow. Elisha means *Jehovah my Saviour*. He was the man who brought God to the people, the pastor-evangelist of Israel's day. Jacob Knapp and Charles G. Finney had the Elijah spirit. Dwight L. Moody and Gypsy Smith were after the type of Elisha. There is room for both in every age.

"Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" (2:14). Oh, for a bit of the old-time power! Oh, for more of the miracles of grace! Read the record, under the mantle of spiritual enduement, a "double portion": Jordan cleft (2:14); the waters of Jericho healed (2:21); Bethel's insolence rebuked (2:23); the valley filled with water (3:20); the widow's oil multiplied (4:6); the

Shunammite's son restored (4:36); the pottage sweetened (4:41); Naaman's leprosy cured (5:14); the axe afloat (6:6); God's chariots at Dothan (6:17); Samaria delivered (7:16). These are the annals of a continuous revival, and they are not abnormal but normal—to the church filled with the Spirit of Almighty God.

“Revive thy work, O Lord!”

MARKED TEXTS

“Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron?” (1:3.) Worldly reliance.

“Where is the Lord God of Elijah?” (2:14.) “The principle of personality is the true principle of Christianity.”—*Carpenter*.

“Peradventure the Spirit of the Lord hath taken him [Elijah] up, and cast him upon some mountain” (2:16). Three days wasted, the gratuitousness of doubt.

“Make this valley full of ditches” (3:16). Run out your channels of influence and wait for God's blessing.

“Behold, yonder is that Shunammite” (4:25). A report of the “lookout committee,” watching for souls.

“But Gehazi said . . . I will run after him, and take somewhat of him” (5:20). The church running after the world's dole.

“They feared the Lord, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations” (17:33). Easy and empty religionism.

CHAPTER 13

1 CHRONICLES

The Story of the Royal Line, or the Establishment of the House of David

Key-thought: Loyalty

Key-text: "Let the house of David thy servant be established before thee" (17:24)

THE books of Chronicles repeat essentially the annals of God's people as recorded before in the books of the Kings, only these later books of Chronicles, edited perhaps by Ezra, emphasize the royal line of David and the true hope of Israel. In general we may say, the Kings give us the history of Israel; the Chronicles the philosophy of that history. Kings records in a broad way the career of Israel at large; Chronicles narrows it down more closely to Judah. Kings deals with the prophets; Chronicles, more particularly with the priests. In Kings we find the annals of the nation and the civil records of Israel; in Chronicles are given the minutes, so to speak, of the church and the ecclesiastical career of God's elect. The one is political; the other religious—one of the people; the other of the temple. In short, 1 Chronicles is David's book, the story of the great king; and it points forward, for those who love His appearing, by many sweet intimations, to a greater Kingdom that is to be.

OUTLINE

1. The royal genealogy (chaps. 1 to 9).
2. The parenthesis of Saul's rule, one little chapter (chap 10).
3. The reign of David (chaps. 11 to 29).

David, David all the way; crown him King: and wait for King David's Greater Son.

As Dr. James M. Gray points out in his luminous "Synthetic Bible Studies," which every student of Scripture might well possess, Judah, unlike Israel, preserves an unbroken line of succession and keeps the Kingship intact, which is distinctly providential and Messianic in its intent. Jesus comes of the

royal family of Judah. Hence Chronicles is in a special manner the chosen book of the Theocracy, and of the Christ of God! It is the crown edition, the issue *de luxe*.

MARGINAL NOTES

Democracy to-day; but ultimately a King—the King. Do not overlook the minor verses, even the genealogies. “In reaching for rhododendrons we trample down the daisies.”

Be not limited by any school of thought; nor yet be withheld from any truth because voiced particularly by some school. Recognize the truth anywhere; accept it and live by it.

Preach the whole truth of the Book without shying or balking, or running afield. Preach it and teach it in its Biblical proportions. Thus avoid both over-emphasis and under-emphasis. “Preach the Word!”

Jesus Christ is the one theme of the Bible; Christ in the Old Testament, Jesus in the New.

We hear much said disparagingly to-day of “Old Testament Christianity.” What is Christianity anywhere but Christ discerned—in the Old Testament afar off; in the New Testament, close at hand. Follow the gleam.

“Old Testament: He is coming; New Testament: He has come; Epistles: He is coming again.”—*W. M. Clark*.

“A risen Christ at God’s right hand is the measure and pledge of the believer’s acceptance.”—*Brooks*.

MARKED TEXTS

“And Jabez [sorrowful] called on the God of Israel, saying, O that thou wouldest bless me indeed” (4:10). Living down an evil name.

“All these which were chosen to be porters in the gates” (9:22). The margin says *purified*. A training course for the ushers’ associations.

“So Saul died for his transgressions” (10:13). Sin is back of every fall.

“Also he went down and slew a lion in a pit in a snowy day” (11:22). One of John McNeil’s great texts. Undaunted by difficulties. David’s “mighty men” are the men who venture for God to-day.

“Men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do” (12:32). Prophetic insight—given to God’s faithful ones.

"Moreover *I* will subdue all thine enemies" (17:10). Do your duty, preach the truth—leave the enemies to Him!

"At Parbar westward, four at the causeway, and two at Parbar" (26:18). Try this text for loyalty in service—every man in his place.

CHAPTER 14

2 CHRONICLES

Solomon and His Successors

Key-word: "The Kingdom"

Key-text: "And Solomon the son of David was strengthened in his kingdom, and the Lord his God was with him, and magnified him exceedingly" (1:1)

Preserve the royal line. Hold fast with God.

OUTLINE

1. Solomon (chaps. 1 to 9).
2. His successors (chaps. 10 to 36).

It is God's King and God's Temple that bulk large here in this book.

- Chapter 1. Solomon consecrating himself for the Temple.
- Chapter 2. Solomon gathering the Material.
- Chapter 3. Solomon building the House.
- Chapter 4. Solomon placing the Altar.
- Chapter 5. Solomon installing the Sacred Ark.
- Chapter 6. Solomon dedicating the House of God.
- Chapter 7. Solomon's work accepted of God.

Thus far, what a picture of the ideal life—God's work and will supreme, all things working toward the highest end.

But, alas, chapters 8 and 9 bring in self and the flesh, and the earthly side of the great King. The descent begins. The best of men are human and fallible. Beware.

It is at Second Chronicles 9:26 that Israel finally realizes the broad dimensions of Joshua 1:4 ("From the wilderness and

this Lebanon even unto the great river"), for we read that Solomon "reigned over all the kings from the river [Euphrates] even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt." But, sad for Solomon and the Kingdom, he got too near to Egypt; his heathen bride led his heart astray, and Israel declined. The successive kings point the sad steps of this decline and of the kingdom's decadence.

But God is good, "his mercy endureth for ever," and he sends, as in Judges, one gracious deliverance or revival after another. Indeed, Second Chronicles may be called the Book of the Great Awakenings. They are five in all. Read them in these days of dearth and yet of longing for revival:

1. The great revivals under Asa (chap. 15); 2. Jehoshaphat (chap. 20); 3. Joash (chaps. 23 and 24); 4. Hezekiah (chaps. 29 to 31); 5. Josiah (chap. 35).

God is a God of revivals. Trust him for his grace: follow his lead.

MARGINAL NOTES

"Survival of the fittest"? Rather, under God, the *revival* of the fittest. He will not let his own utterly fail.

"To be happy," said Charles Lamb, "take short views of life." But to the Christian the long view is the best.

Every act of self-denial makes room for blessing in the soul. Get another room ready to-day.

Every act of selfishness shuts a door on spiritual blessedness in the future. Open the doors to the Spirit.

Selfishness always hurts and slays. "What," says Henry Churchill King, "does this present war teach, but the fruits among the nations of unmitigated selfishness—a world laboratory treatment before the eyes of all?"

"We are either Bible or libels."—*F. B. Meyer.*

Said one of the old Fathers, "I expect three wonders in heaven. First, that I reach it; second, that I miss some I thought to see there; third, that I see some I did not expect to see."

"Holiness is mentioned 889 times in various forms in God's Word."—*Webb-Peploe.*

"To be filled with the Spirit is to be given a new sense—to discern spiritual things."—*Jowett.*

"You cannot lay the cross along the natural path so that it be else than a stumbling-block."—*Lasher.*

Follow Jesus rather than men—even the best of men.

MARKED TEXTS

"He garnished the house with precious stones for beauty" (3:6). Give Him your best.

"The cherubims spread forth their wings over the place of the ark" (5:8). Hide there.

"The trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound" (5:13). One note from pulpit and choir loft—Jesus!

"That thine eyes may be open upon this house day and night" (6:20). God's watch over his church.

"Let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation" (6:41). Good form in the kingdom.

"Happy are thy men, and happy are these thy servants" (9:7). Be glad. "The joy of the Lord is your strength."

"O Lord, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee" (14:11). Carry it to headquarters. (See Acts 4:29.)

"And when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushments" (20:22). Munitions of praise. Smite with song.

"Berachah," blessing (20:26). Keep to your name, men of Berachah—blessing, blessing always, everywhere!

"Then they brought out the king's son, and put upon him the crown" (23:11). Some have done it now. All will do it *then*. Hasten the day!

CHAPTER 15

EZRA

First Book of the Restoration. Back to God's House!

Key-word: "Build"

Key-text: "To build the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem" (1:5)

OUTLINE

Returning (chaps. 1, 2).

Rebuilding (chaps. 3 to 6).

Reforming (chaps. 7 to 10).

PICTORIALY, this book looks backward and forward. Looking backward, it is a kind of Second Exodus, with Ezra taking the place of Moses, his prototype, as inspired writer as well as leader. Both were great organizers, great teachers, great lawgivers, raised up each in his time to fulfil God's gracious purposes and raise up downtrodden Israel. Both, also, like their divine Christ who was to come after them, bent beneath the load of a reluctant and recreant people, but by God's grace, with singular meekness and the might of mercy, brought Israel through.

Looking forward, it hints graphically the landing of our Pilgrim Fathers on a bleak and hostile shore. They came slowly, laboriously, and by timid, struggling relays. But God gave them furtherance and foothold. It was his city and it is his city still. He will bring back His own: He will raise up Zion out of ruins.

At Cyrus' first call (536 B. C.), fifty thousand, more or less, returned under Zerubbabel. These, as named in chapter 2, laid the foundations of the temple with great rejoicing. Then as always came the adversaries to try them. They are much hindered, but God mercifully sent King Darius (519 B. C.), like Cyrus before him, to lift them up. Haggai and Zechariah, the prophets, from within the ranks speak their strong encouragement, and the temple is at last dedicated (chap. 6). It is Zerubbabel's temple, not so sumptuous perhaps as Solomon's earlier edifice, but it is the house of God, and they thank God and take courage.

It is not till the seventh chapter, indeed, that Ezra appears in person (about 457 B. C.). He leads a second expedition from Bablyon to reinforce the struggling colonists in Palestine. He bears a commission from Artaxerxes, the King, another of God's servants of the "Noah's carpenters" stamp, who built half blindly from without and aided in accomplishing the plans of eternity. Nehemiah comes thirteen years later (445 B. C.) to finish the re-establishment.

Of Ezra it is said he "prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments" (7:10). His name means *help*, and he is one of the great triumvirate of the Old Testament times (Moses, Samuel, Ezra) who wrote and wrought to keep the record intact and hold Israel to her divinely appointed mission. To Ezra we are indebted for the literary and ecclesiastical renaissance of that day, and in the codification of Israel's laws and the formation of her Scripture canon he did a work for which he was appointed of God and whose fruits abide to this hour.

MARGINAL NOTES

Build a church house, and be enrolled in the noble *Order of Ezra*.

This is the Editor's Book of the Bible. Ezra was the great redactor and reporter of sacred history.

Ezra was the Thomas Jefferson of his times, laying constitutional foundations for all the future.

Four kinds of people every leader has to deal with—workers, shirkers, jerkers (they go by jerks), quirkers (such as stand off and find fault).

"To speak well, two rules: Be master of your subject (thought); Be master of your audience (sympathy)."—*Bashford*.

The New Testament quotes the Prophets. The Prophets quote the Law. Let them stand as given.

What we ate yesterday or the day before will not keep us alive to-day. The Bible is "Daily Bread." Eat and live.

Jesus came at last, like Ezra, when his people needed Him most. We need Thee now, Lord Jesus. Come quickly.

MARKED TEXTS

"Who is there among you of all his people? His God be with him, and *let him go up to Jerusalem*" (1:3). The test and touchstone. No Christian can ignore Jerusalem, the city of the great King.

"Help him with silver," margin, *lift him up* (1:4). Leverage that counts.

"They gave after their ability" (2:69). Apostolic giving (1 Cor. 16:2).

"And appointed the Levites, from twenty years old and upward, to *set forward* the work of the house of the Lord" (3:8). Literally, to act as *precentors*—the holy office of song.

"They praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid" (3:11). When everybody sings.

"Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God" (4:3). Discriminate beneficence.

"Lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage" (9:8). The fit cry of the church to-day.

CHAPTER 16

NEHEMIAH

Second Book of the Restoration. The Rebuilding of the City

Key-word: "Arise and build"

Key-text: "The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build" (2:20)

Key-word: "Come"

OUTLINE

Repairing the City Walls (chaps. 1-8).

Repairing the People's Morals (chaps. 9-13).

EZRA built the temple; this comes first. Nehemiah built the city; this follows close.

Ezra means *help*, the saving help. So came Jesus to the helping and saving of his people. Nehemiah means *comfort of Jehovah*. So in due time came the Holy Spirit, Comforter divine, for the guiding and strengthening of his own. Trust God's care and keep.

Nehemiah, more closely rendered, means the *sigh of God*. It

is the price we pay to give comfort. It is oft with groanings that cannot be uttered, such is the comfort of the Spirit. And see Jesus compassionating the multitude, as sheep without a shepherd. Behold Him weeping over Jerusalem. Mark the tears and bloody sweat of Gethsemane. It costs to comfort.

Chapter 1 is Cupbearer's Chapter. Nehemiah leaves his high position at the throne as royal cupbearer to the king, that in distant, smitten Jerusalem he may be humble cupbearer to the people. Thus did Jesus leave the glory throne to give the wine of his blood on this earthly footstool. Thus do Christians put behind them worldly care and honor to give a cup of cold water to God's thirsty ones everywhere. "For I was the king's cupbearer."

Chapter 2 is Picket Chapter. God's monitor sent out to view the broken walls and plan in secret for the people's uplift. He is no pastor who does not do it, watchfully, prayerfully, for his people's sake, often in secret and with agony of soul. But it is a travail that presages fruitage.

Chapter 3 is "Next" Chapter. The word occurs fifteen times. "And next unto him builded the men of Jericho. And next to them builded Zaccur, the son of Imri" (v. 2). And so on "next," and "next," and "next." Each man close up to his neighbor's side; *at his hand*, as the margin says, linking up the line and keeping the work intact—team work. This is the way to build a church and to make it count for something, the only way.

Chapter 4, War-footing Chapter, is rich in heartening suggestions for the church in a hostile world!

One mind: "So built we the wall . . . for the people had a mind to work" (v. 6).

Watch and pray: "We made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch" (v. 9).

Get rid of dead timber: "There is much *rubbish*; so that we are not able to build" (v. 10).

All at it: "We returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work" (v. 15).

Both hands: "Every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon" (v. 17).

Follow your leader: "And he that sounded the trumpet was by me" (v. 18).

Dead in earnest: "None of us put off our clothes" (v. 23).

And keep clean: "Saving that every one put them off for washing" (v. 23). That was sensible.

The Book of the Law is brought to the front in chapter 8, with a great protracted meeting in which Nehemiah, Ezra, and all the people take part with joy and singing.

From here on to the end of the book, Nehemiah appears as the reformer of the morals of the people—a good type of the Reform Mayor. Four abuses were corrected: commercial graft, priestly lethargy, desecrated Sabbaths, and mixed marriages.

And close at hand stood Ezra, the consecrated pastor, jealous for the Lord's house. Happy the people and blessed the work with such devoted leadership. Dr. A. J. Gordon at Clarendon Street, Boston, resolved, God helping him, that he and his church should be in everything right with God.

MARGINAL NOTES

Jesus is the promised Restorer of the people. "The desire of all nations shall come" (Hag. 2:7).

Was it one of the Beechers who said, "We used to know a revival was coming by the lint on father's knees"?

Nehemiah laid down five principles for religious administration (see chap. 4): 1. Division of labor. 2. Adaptation of talent. 3. Conservation of resources. 4. Co-operation. 5. Concentration.

MARKED TEXTS

"Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandest thy servant Moses" (1:8). And yet the destructive critics affirm that the Bible began with Ezra.

"Think upon me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people" (5:19). The Christian worker's *nunc dimittis*.

CHAPTER 17

ESTHER

Book of God's Providence. A Page Out of the Records of
Captive Israel

Key-word: "Deliverance"

Key-text: "Then shall there enlargement and deliverance
arise" (4:14)

OUTLINE

1. Haman's Ascendency (chaps. 1 to 5).
2. Mordecai's Ascendency (chaps. 6 to 10).

Read here the romance of history.

IT IS the hand of the Unseen in the affairs of men, a skylight on Gentile annals. God's name is not mentioned here, but the book of Esther is full of God, who hides himself behind every word and syllable. "Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own." Trust the God of Israel. All times are in his hand.

In fact, this old world cannot get rid of God. Neither can Israel. He will not let them go. He followed them to Babylon. When prophets were sometime silent and the temples closed God was still keeping guard. When kings of the earth feasted and forgot, he remembered, and his hand was on their hand. They worked out his sovereign counsels, as, in the end, they do to-day.

The book opens with the feast of the world's prince, it closes with the feast of God's prince. It hints the ultimate round-up, with Israel in the ascendent here below, and God over all. For a while Haman is exalted; at last, Mordecai. Read here the sharp, sheer, and sure reversals of human history and the final triumph of God's elect.

Esther is like Joseph and like David—God's little ones—hid for a while, but presently brought to the front, to work out great issues. Always He has some one in reserve to fulfil the eternal purposes. Sometimes it is a man. "When the tale of the bricks is doubled, Moses comes." Sometimes it is a woman. As with Hannah; and with Esther here; and, in due

time, with Mary. All the years are His. The Cross is at the center; and close by a Crown!

Esther stands out as God's chosen one, a sweet, winsome personality, and come to the Kingdom for such a time as this. She is the burning bush of ancient story, ablaze but unconsumed. See her taking her life in her hand and going in for her people's sake unto the King. "And if I perish, I perish." Here are rich evangelical intimations—substitution, vicariousness, propitiation. Two lordly maidens join hands across the void in behalf of the aliens. They are Ruth and Esther. One brings the Gentiles to Zion, the other brings Zion to the Gentiles. Both leave the door on the latch, and hint the longsuffering of our God.

But it is Israel that figures most largely. There is strong-shining dispensational truth in all these pages. The feast of Purim, still celebrated among God's ancient people (like Guy Fawkes' day), rehearses it for us from year to year. Behold the Jew, given his liberty, of old, to stand for his own and execute God's righteous wrath. So shall it be again in the end of days. Respect the Jew. He is the man of the future. Be kind to him: for your own sake, be kind. For when he moves at last (having first "mourned") all the world will be moved with him, and blessedly so.

MARGINAL NOTES

Xerxes passes; Israel remains.

God's lines run out through all the world.

"The wicked work the righteous will of heaven."

If you miss the explicit terms of Deity here, remember that this book had to pass through the hands of the Persian censor. But you cannot eliminate God.

"The word of redemption is the sum of all God's providences."

MARKED TEXTS

"That every man should bear rule in his own house" (1:22). Heathen "bear rule"; Christian—*share* rule.

"Be ready against that day" (3:14). A kind of an interrupted St. Bartholomew's day—a Hun's day, disappointed. Thank God!

"So will I go in unto the king" (4:16). He intercedes.

"I and my people" (7:4). Christ's identification with His own.

"Seal it with the king's ring" (8:8). God hath spoken. His word cannot fail. Look up, and rejoice! "For the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse."

CHAPTER 18

JOB

Book of Patience, or the Secret of Living in a Suffering World

Key-word: "Tried"

Key-text: "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (23:10)

OUTLINE

1. The Narrative (chaps. 1 and 2).
2. The Controversy (chaps. 3 to 41).
3. Conclusion (chap. 42).

THIS book—Lightfoot thinks it came to Moses in his Midian sojourn—deals with the world-old mysteries of human life, Why do the righteous suffer? What is the meaning of it? Why does God permit it, especially with his own?

The drama of Job is an effort to solve these problems, and we believe the pen that wrote it was inspired of God.

Proverbs says, "Righteousness is blessedness." Ecclesiastes and Job, as Demming shrewdly intimates, present two apparent exceptions. One speaks of disappointment, the other of pain; one tells us what true righteousness is; the other, true blessedness. Ecclesiastes concludes: There is no righteousness and no blessedness apart from living with God. Job discovers that there is no blessedness and no righteousness apart from submitting to God. Both together say, Give God the glory: yield and wield.

Job seems to have been written to guard the Jew from a notion that he was and is in danger of falling into, that he has a corner in holiness and that there is revenue in it for him; i. e., serving God for profit. But as Farrar says, This book

anticipates the Christian principle that we are to serve God for goodness' sake alone, whether we receive pay or pain.

Prosperity is said to be the blessing of the Old Testament, and adversity of the New; but, in the end, "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

The main controversy is, Why does God permit the righteous to be afflicted?

Job, among the ashes, cries out, "I cannot understand it; it does not seem right."

Job's wife, looking on, wails, "It is all wrong; your religion is a failure, curse God and die."

Eliphaz says, with poor consolation to the sufferer, "God is great and unerring. What have you done to bring this about?"

Bildad speaks out, "God is just. Confess your faults."

Zophar, in his turn, says, "God is wise. He knoweth vain men."

Wretched comforters these for poor Job.

But here comes in Elihu, God's man, and he says, "God is good: look up, and trust Him—for he is God!"

Then Jehovah himself speaks from the whirlwind as if in confirmation of Elihu's appeal, "I am God, and beside me there is none else."

And now Job falls prostrate in surrender and adoration to say, "Lord, Thou art God: Thou doest all things well, I will trust and not be afraid."

Here is his final confession, that sums it all up: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself [count myself out], and repent in dust and ashes" (42:56).

It is the victory of submissive faith. When we bow to God's will, we find God's way. Stoop to conquer. Bend and obey. This is the lesson of Job.

MARGINAL NOTES

Ecclesiastes preaches; Job practices.

Proverbs says, "Be good, and you will be happy." Job says, "Be happy [in God] and you will be good."

There has been but one patient sufferer, Jesus. And He is our righteousness and our blessedness.

"All sickness is sin," say Job's comforters to-day. Jesus says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). God's comfort.

MARKED TEXTS

"Hast not thou made an hedge about him?" (1:10.) The untried innocence of Eden. Dr. Pierson finds in Job the whole Bible and God's way of salvation in outline.

"Curse God, and die" (2:9). Literally, say *good-bye* to God, the voice of despair.

"Let the day perish wherein I was born" (3:3). The cry of the flesh under affliction (see Isa. 38:10). Dr. Thirtle, of England, thinks Isaiah told this story of Job to Hezekiah in his sickness.

"He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee" (5:19). The secret of the untroubled life. There is no seventh trouble—it is gone!

"I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth" (19:25). The Christian is the man who *knows*. For the certitudes of the faith read 1 John 5.

CHAPTER 19

PSALMS

Book of Devotion. The Christian's Song and Prayer Book
Key-thought: Prayer and Praise

Key-text: "O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation" (95:1)

HERE we have the ^{godly man} Christian on his knees, as in Proverbs, which follows, we have the Christian on his feet. The door of the temple is open. Go in with the Psalmist to rest and pray. It is a very sweet privilege in the rush and riot of mundane things. Stop and think; rest and be thankful.

There are one hundred and fifty Psalms in all. The solid gold of Christian experience, the century-old heart-cries of love and devotion. You may dip in where you will. "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord" (Hos. 14:2).

Quite broadly we may divide them into three fifties: 1. David's Psalms. 2. The Psalms of Asaph, the sons of Korah,

etc. 3. Addendum. What matters who wrote them? They are of God for weary souls; sing them, and make them your own. The Jews divided these Psalms for convenience of worship into five books, largely according to the period of composition and the main author. 1. Davidic, 1-42. 2. Levitical, 43-72. 3. The times of Hezekiah, 73-89. 4. Pre-Captivity, 90-106. 5. Post-Captivity, 107-150. We have our own captivities and deliverances. Suit the Psalms to your needs.

In general, the Psalms group themselves about five great themes: Zion, the Temple, the Law, Israel, and Israel's King.

Devotionally we may let them spell out for us acrostically the divine appellation *Jesus*, for this is the one great theme. Thus:

Jerusalem, City of God (76, 125).

Edifice, House of God (84, 122).

Statutes, Law of God (1, 19, 119).

United Israel, People of God (85, 135).

Salvation, Purpose of God (32, 67).

It all sums up in—Jesus, the Christ of God (45, 110).

“We praise Thee, O God, for the Son of Thy love,
For Jesus who died and is now gone above.”

We call these songs David's Psalms because he gives the key-note, and his voice rises highest in the sacred choir. Catch David's note and spirit and you can sing David's songs: Marching song, Prayer song, Praise song, Valley song, Hilltop song, Confession song; yes, and Imprecatory song. We may need it yet for God's enemies ere the last vials of righteous judgment are poured forth. Run the whole gamut and keep step with David and David's Lord all the way. The last are praise. They lead straight into the City gates—when the King comes in!

MARGINAL NOTES

Name your Psalms one by one. First Psalm, Psalm of the Book; Second Psalm, Psalm of the Son; Third Psalm, Psalm of the Shield; Fourth Psalm, Evening Psalm; Fifth Psalm, Morning Psalm. Give a fit name to each Psalm, and it becomes your own.

You may, if you will, read the vivid chapters of Bunyan's “Pilgrim's Progress” through the opening pages of the Psalms: Psalm 6, Slough of Despond; Psalm 7, Wicket Gate; Psalm 8, House Beautiful.

Israel's typical march from Egypt to Canaan may also be glimpsed: Psalm 9, Migdol Psalm; Psalm 10, Rephidim. 78

Best of all, enshrine here the record of your experiences: Psalm 11, Trust Psalm; 12, Lip Psalm; 13, Homesick Psalm. Set your stone of witness. "Ebenezer." Up to this point hath the Lord helped me!

Luther called the Psalms "A Little Bible."

Jerome said, "The Psalms are the Christian ballads."

Spurgeon put it, "The Psalms are the Christian's map of experience." "Oh, to be shut up," he adds, "in a cave with David, to hear him sing."

MARKED TEXTS

"Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (1:3). Literally, *cut its way through*. It pays to follow the Book.

"The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment" (1:5)—have a *standing*. What is your standing with God?

"The kings of the earth set themselves . . . yet have I set my Son" (2:2, 6). God's final settlement.

"Thou art my son . . . ask of me" (2:7, 8). The Son can ask great things. Make your requests to God through Him.

"In the morning will I direct *my prayer* unto thee, and will look up" (5:3). Not "my prayer" alone (in italics). It means the whole life. A new direction for the soul.

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" (8:4.) Or *when!* (Hebrew)—when thou takest thought of him. The dignity rather than the diminishing of man.

"The fool hath said in his heart, *There is no God*" (14:1). No, he is not so great a fool as to say that. "No God", he says—no God for me! His folly is stubbornness. But that is enough to shut him out, and make him a perishing fool at last.

"I have set the Lord always before me" (16:8). The key not only to correct living but to right thinking. It is the major note of the Psalms. *Jesus all in all!*

CHAPTER 20

PROVERBS

Book of Wisdom. The Saint on His Feet

Key-word: "Wisdom"

Key-text: "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom" (3:13)

THE Psalms for Devotion; the Proverbs for Practise; the Psalms for the closet and the cloister; the Proverbs for the marketplace and the playground.

The Jews compared Proverbs to the Outer Court; Ecclesiastes to the Holy Place; the Songs of Solomon to the Holy of Holies. But do not forget that the Altar of Burnt Offering and the Laver of Cleansing are in the outer court. Come with a surrendered heart and with a sanctified soul, to get the most out of Proverbs.

Yet there is something for everybody here. We are out in the Court of the Congregation. Out where the people live their daily lives, and jostle each other in the highways. A book for everyday reading, this. It was written by Solomon (who spake wiser than he lived) four hundred years before the Seven Wise Men of Greece.

A good general division might be: 1. Counsel for young men (chaps. 1 to 10). 2. Counsel for all men (chaps. 11 to 20). 3. Counsel for kings and rulers (chaps. 21 to 31).

Wonderful nuggets of wisdom are here; tense, and terse, and true. Do not try to add to them. A learned lawyer attempted it once—thought he would write a few before breakfast. He came away baffled, humbled, and glorifying the ineffable wisdom of God.

It is a system of divine philosophy or of conduct founded thereon. As Dr. Horton says, there is no agnosticism here. God's sovereignty and God's immanence are taken for granted. Find his ways, and be wise.

The book closes with woman's chapter (31). One of the most beautiful in all the Word. The Bible is the true book of Woman's Rights. "Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates."

MARGINAL NOTES

Look for the blood mark in each inspired book of the Bible. You will find it here at 3:12.

Jesus is the Beginning of all in Proverbs, as He is the End of all in Ecclesiastes, and the All in All in Psalms.

Wisdom in Proverbs is piety. In Ecclesiastes it is mere prudence, sagacity. In the later Gospels and Epistles, it is eternal life.

These words are "apples of gold in pictures of silver" (25:11). Study the picture, but do not miss the apples—devotional Bible study.

Proverbs is an intensely practical book, exposing a series of traps for the simple.

Proverbs, as Dr. Hopkins says, is not a vein of gold to be dug out, but a heap of jewels ready for use. Help yourself.

"Any fool could have written this." So? Suppose *you* try it!

MARKED TEXTS

(We find our book of Proverbs profusely annotated. Well-trodden ground, this.)

"To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding" (1:2). The true college spirit—education of self.

"To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion." (Margin, *advisement*): (1:3). Plain common sense. Don't be a fool.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (1:7). Start with reverence always.

"Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird" (Margin, everything that hath a *wing*): (1:17). That is what wings are for—and eyes.

"In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Straighten them (3:6). The Lord's foot-rule.

"Whom the Lord loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth" (3:12). The hint of the cross in Proverbs.

"The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens" (3:19). The same wisdom in earth as in heaven. We build with God. See John 14:12 ("The works that I do shall he do also"; cf. John 20:23).

"The way of evil . . . avoid it, pass not by it, turn

from it, and pass away" (4:15). God's danger signal: "Stop! Look! Listen!"

The passage 4:23-27 takes in the whole body. Verse 23, "Keep thy *heart*"; verse 24, "Put away from thee a froward *mouth*"; verse 25, "Let thine *eyes* look right on"; verse 26, "Ponder the path of thy *feet*"; verse 27 (broadly), "Turn not to thy right *hand*."

"He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him" (11:26). The sin of the elevator and the storage cellar. A warning to the profiteersmen of to-day.

"The just man walketh in his integrity; his children are blessed after him" (20:7). Douay: "He leaves behind him blessed children." A good man's legacy to the world.

"There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the Lord" (21:30). At last, God's will and God's way! Hasten it, O Lord!

CHAPTER 21

ECCLESIASTES

Book of Experience, or the Soul's Autobiography

Key-word (with reference to this world): "Vanity"

Key-text: "All was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun" (2:11)

OUTLINE

1. Confession (chaps. 1 to 7).
2. Admonition (chaps. 8 to 12).

IS THIS an ancient "Pilgrim's Progress"? Yes, but at the first it reads more like "the Rake's Progress." The confessions of a royal roué.

It is, in fact, the *apologia meae vitae* of King Solomon; the worldly side of his life, and like all inspired writings it tells the truth, the utter truth, of the matter in hand.

We have here, in profound introspective discussion, the new and old question: Is life worth living? Solomon has tested

it to the full—no man could better do it or better tell it—and the answer he gives is not reassuring for the life that now is. But wait for his latest word; study well his conclusion. That gives the clue to the maze.

Chapter 1. Try Wisdom; what better thing in all the world? And Solomon was the wisest of men. He apparently knew everything worth knowing here below. "I gave my heart to know wisdom." Yet at last he was forced to cry out, "Vanity of vanities!" "For in much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow" (1:18).

Chapter 2. Try Mirth and Pleasure. "I said in my heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure." And what is his deliberate conclusion? "This is vanity!" (2:1.)

Chapter 3. Try Epicureanism—a time for everything, with discretion. But again, "what profit?" (3:9). Vanity of vanities!

Chapter 4. Try the Stoic's philosophy. "Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive" (4:2). Deadness of spirit, Nirvana, the ultimate good. "Surely this also is vanity," he wails, "vanity and vexation of spirit" (4:16).

Chapter 5. Try Ritualism—formal religion. "Pay that which thou hast vowed" (5:4). This too is vanity.

Chapter 6. Try Wealth. Solomon had it: "A man to whom God hath given riches." What is the good of it? "God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it; this is vanity, and it is an evil disease" (6:2).

Chapter 7. Try Reputation. "A good name is better than precious ointment" (7:1). It lasts not long in this world; vanity still.

But now, with chapter 8 comes the first hint of the final conclusion: "Yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God" (8:12); voiced more fully in the last words of the book, "Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man" (12:13).

In short, the Preacher, as he is called, who has been looking back and looking around and within, now looks *up*, and he sees God and is satisfied. Satisfied, as we know from the fuller light of the New Testament, because of God's *satisfaction* in Christ; for "this is his *commandment*, That we should believe on the name of his Son" (1 John 3:23). Keep this one commandment and all commandments are kept, and we have learned the secret of living.

It was Dr. William G. Moorehead who gave us the key to

the vain quest in the phrase, "under the sun" (1:3); it occurs twenty-eight times). "Under the sun, life is scarce worth living; but above the sun and in the heavens—glorious!

MARGINAL NOTES

Dr. Pierson well said, "The key to Ecclesiastes is that a man is too big for this world."

"I have seen all, coarse pullies, dirty ropes, behind the scenes, and I think of nothing now but killing time the best way I can."—*Chesterfield*.

And God said "It is good" (Gen. 1:10). Only in Him, through Jesus Christ his Son, can you and I say it.

MARKED TEXTS

"Unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again" (1:7). Natural science.

"All the labor of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite [margin, *soul*] is not filled" (6:7). "Thou fool"—the man who tried to feed his soul with corn (Luke 12:20). "Eat ye that which is good, and let your *soul* delight itself in fatness" (Isa. 55:2).

CHAPTER 22

THE SONG OF SOLOMON

The Christian's Love Song. The Nuptials of the King

Key-word: "Beloved"

Key-text: "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine" (6:3)

SONG of Solomon, we call it, but it is more. Song of the loving heart, the reciprocal affection of Christ and his Bride.

One sees her yet, Swedish Martha, leaning over the wash-tub, wiping the suds from her arms: "I'm God's wife," she quaintly said; and in the light of her eye you could catch the deep meaning of it, the sanctity of holy affection—Christ's dear love in her soul.

Nay, suave students of "the Bible as literature," crude and cruel censors of the Eternal Word, you shall not rob God's little ones of their sweet honey in the comb; you shall not take the children's bread and give them a stone.

A song of loves, you name it, the mere amours of a royal roué. It may be that and naught else to some; but to the ardent Christian it is the love-song of his inner nature sanctified; the spontaneous, resistless call of the soul for its heaven-sent Spouse, restless till it rest in Him.

"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly."

Two calls in fact, Christ's and his Bride's. They answer back to each other in love's fond expressions of yearning and delight. Do these sentences seem strange to you? They will not seem so strange when at last you learn to lose yourself in Him. To ridicule them is like laughing at a bundle of mother's love letters. You understand them better *when you are yourself in love.*

Two lovers here, indeed, Christ and the church. Saphir, the converted Jew, finds the clue to these songs in James 4:8, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." Come to Him, as "*dear children*" (Eph. 5:1), with abandon of holy affection, and you will get love's sweet response. "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth; for thy love is better than wine."

Solomon's love for his Egyptian bride naturally gives a narrative basis to the book, but its inner truth is prophecy, ineffably inspired and refreshing; the language of sacred love, in the heart's close tryst with God, the covenant bridal of earth and sky. It is all love!

The recurrent chapters give us the simple progress of thought: (1) Love's yearning call: "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest." (2) Love's ardent response: "The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh." (3) Love's tender constancy: "I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go." (4) Love's sweet confession: "Behold, thou art fair, my love: behold, thou art fair." (5) Love's anxious quest: "I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer." (6) Love's plaintive longing: "Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women?" (7) Love's exultant triumph: "I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me." (8) Love's glad fruition: "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?"

Get back to mother's Book and mother's love. There is

sweetest sentiment and richest treasure here. But come in simple, childlike trust and devotion. "Unto you therefore which *believe* he is precious"—not otherwise. The Word is jealous: "It doeth good," its best good, "to the upright in heart." Spurgeon found it a mine of wealth; he was ever bringing honey to his people out of this rock. Paul struck the key-note. "This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Eph. 5:32). Call it mystical, if you will, but through the lattice get a satisfying glimpse of your Messiah!

MARGINAL NOTES

This is the greatest love-story in the world—two worlds.

Isaiah knew it; "As a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee" (62:5).

Ezekiel caught a glimpse of it: "I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head" (16:11, 12).

David also, in his 45th Psalm, which is a kind of replica of the Song—"Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips" (v. 2). To the Jews this was the final book—their holy of holies. Its reading was forbidden till the age of thirty was reached.

We shall understand the Song better and sing it more clearly *when the King comes*, and we "put on the wedding robe" (Rev. 19:6-9).

MARKED TEXTS

"I sat down under his shadow with great delight" (2:3). The posture of the true church, in the waiting days of earth.

"My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away" (2:10). Rebecca at the well.

"Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out" (4:16). "Sweet are the uses of adversity."

"Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night" (5:2). Christ incarnate. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock."

"Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices" (8:14).

Finis, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus; come quickly!"

CHAPTER 23

ISAIAH

The Messianic Prophet; Book of Expectation

Key-word: "Vision"

Key-text: "The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem" (1:1)

OUTLINE

1. Pastoral and Historical (chaps. 1 to 39).
2. Prophetic and Hortatory (chaps. 40 to 66).

HERE is a man who spoke to the times—what prophet could do otherwise? Here is a man, also, who spoke to the eternities; hence he is the prophet for all times. We sit at his feet to-day and follow the pointing of his index finger—Lo, your King!

Two Isaiahs? Certainly, if you like. The prophet who saw Israel in captivity and wrote accordingly, and the prophet who saw Israel restored, and pulled out another case of type, Big Primer, to tell it; the prophet who with sad eyes saw Jesus humiliated, and told the story; and the prophet who beheld Christ exalted and shouted his vision from the housetop. But it is the same prophet all the way,—calm reading and fair reasoning declare it,—but suiting his language, always, to the theme in hand.

Two Isaiahs? Why not half a dozen? If sawn asunder, the fate of all prophets with the heady, why not proceed to the limit with your easy dissections? It is great sport, indeed. The writer went with the rest through the agile process, and he has a copy of the Scriptures from the critical schoolroom of post-graduate days with blue mark and red mark, shading into pink—your polychrome Bible. All very interesting in the child's play of chopped-up locomotive, patchwork quilt, etc. Very interesting, though sometimes hazardous. But when we got into the work and resumed our normal senses, what did we see? We saw a seer of the Lord whose prophecies clearly reflected the many-sidedness of the divine character he was depicting; and we found that the only way to understand Isaiah

was to understand Isaiah's Christ. And to-day—we are free to say it—we refuse to go to Germany or elsewhere to hear any so-called savant interpret Isaiah or any part of the vital Word, who does not *know Jesus*.

Isaiah was true to his ministry. He laid bare the sins of Israel, and called the people to repentance. His first chapter is the prelude of all his preachments. Come back to God! But his major theme is the Coming One. It is Jesus. Jesus all the way. Seen near, seen far, one Christ! Kepler, failing to bring the heavenly bodies into satisfactory adjustment with one center, at last conceived of the ellipse with two foci, and everything fell into harmony. So when in our reverent study of Scripture we catch the dual center of Christ on the Cross and Christ on the Throne, the radiant and radiating foci of Messianic prophecy, the lamp shines clear and we begin to see what the inspired prophet saw—the world's Redeemer! This to us is Isaiah.

WHY I INSERTED A NEW MARKING

In beginning the books of The Prophets, may the writer speak a personal word? Personal and familiar, we may venture to make it, for in these months that we have walked happily together through the thickets of God's Garden of Revelation, listening to his voice, sometimes grave, sometimes tender, always gracious, we have learned to know each other better and to sympathize in our eager quest of the Truth. When, indeed, do hearts grow fonder than over the dear Book, beating with the pulse of the divine Love? We have passed together through the Pilgrim Pathway of the Patriarchs, the course of the Kings, and more lately have let down the bars of the Psalm Country. Now we come to the Procession of the Prophets. Those rapt, yearning, forth-looking faces speak from their lips two words to us: *He is coming!* and, *He is coming again!* Like most students of the Book, trained under our modern masters, always respected and loved, the writer entered upon his own serial perusal of the Bible, now ten times repeated, with the single uplifting thought of yonder Cross on the hilltop; but as he read farther and deeper there emerged gradually but surely upon the sight a radiant Crown! The eye of the ancient seer was looking farther than the sufferings of Calvary, and, though reverent all, his gaze was captive to the Kingdom and the Glory that should follow! And so recurrently on the margins of the Prophets in our "Study Bible," which we are following now, you may find if you look a new mark inserted, a mark pencilled and punctuated mostly under English skies, "*2 a*," "*2 a*," "*2 a*."

Second Advent is what it means, and it lets in a new light on the Eternal Word that gives fuller meaning and makes the whole to glow with the effulgence that is about the Throne. We make no fad or fetish of it, but *fact* it is, as all reverent study should grant—glorious Fact, and who would suppress it or minimize it? who rather does not lift it and rejoice in it? It is the glint of gold in all the Word, *our joy* in the present, *our hope* in the future.

MARKED TEXTS

"Though your sins be as scarlet" (1:18), 1 a.

"And it shall come to pass in the last days" (2:2), 2 a.

"He is despised and rejected of men" (53:3), 1 a.

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee" (60:1), 2 a.

Enough! Keep your eye toward the Sunrise!

CHAPTER 24

JEREMIAH

Prophet of Warning. Book of Admonition

Key-word "Go and Cry"

Key-text: "Behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land" (1:18)

OUTLINE

1. Jerusalem before the Fall (chaps. 1 to 38).
2. Jerusalem after the Fall (chaps. 39 to 45).
3. Against other nations (chaps. 46 to 52).

BRAVE, noble old Jeremiah, appointed, as his name signifies, of the Lord, to speak out against the vices and vanities of his day; "against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land"—a clean sweep. No soft and easy task his. No velvet of tongue or touch. He was against everybody, and everybody was against him—everybody save God.

And why? Because the whole nation was gone out of the way; and he was sent of God to throw himself into the breach, as it were, and head off the pellmell rush toward the pit. The railroad engineer said, "the red is always agin ye." Jeremiah was ordained to swing the red light. Naturally, he was not a popular man. And he felt it, as does every burdened son of the prophets. "Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child" (1:6). But speak he must. God help him, and God pity the people, if in an adulterous age he hold his peace with the bridge wide open and his eyes open to see it!

Every preacher is in one essential part of his mission a Jeremiah to his times. There is another way, and there were other prophets in Jeremiah's day who chose it, the path of least resistance, the spirit of the age—the *Zeitgeist*. Where are they now? Jeremiah took humbly the way appointed him, the Calvary road, and he lives to-day with the Man of Calvary, in whose footsteps he trod, and he brought a multitude with him. "Tell the truth," some one remarked, "but look out: they will kill you." Very well, Christ will make us live again.

This is a book of admonition, most of all to-day, to preachers. Go with the crowd or go with God—which? Every young minister must choose. And he must expect to pay the price; most of God's ministers have learned it. We thought at first that all we needed was the truth, the people would hear us, the people of God, at least. But no; the more we got hold of the truth, and the more the truth, the utter truth, got hold of us, the more the men of earth turned away from us or rose in opposition. We found that we needed besides the truth the courage of the truth and the deep consciousness that our feet were on the Rock.

The servant of God is like the telegraph pole at the side of the way, standing staunchly perpendicular, lest the wire ground and spoil the sweet messages from the skies. So stood grand old Jeremiah, oft maligned but loving the people still; his feet in the dungeon and in the mire, but his head in the heavens, his hand pointed to the skies. Not horses nor princes. Go not down to Egypt for help. Repent of your sins; accept God's judgments on your transgressions; and return unto the Lord! This was the voice of Jeremiah.

Do not the times that now are call for such a preachment to-day? *Amen! 1929!*

MARGINAL NOTES

It is easy, comparatively speaking, to be a popular preacher; but you must reckon with God.

The Kingdom of God is both incremental and cataclysmal; it comes gradually, and it comes suddenly. Be busy, and be ready.

David Baron, the converted Jew, said of Jeremiah 31 and 32, originally bound together, "You need not speculate about Israel's history: it is written down in a book." And he laid his hand reverently on these pages.

Dr. Haldeman thinks this book looks forward to the Great Tribulation. It has fulfilments yet to come.

"Preach conviction, not opinion. Preach nothing till it has come to the heat of conviction."—*Wayland Hoyt*.

Be patient, God always uses the yielded life—but in his own way. *I may be another Jeremiah!*

MARKED TEXTS

"Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth" (1:9). The tongue of God is every true preacher.

"Be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them" (1:17). One face only before the prophet—God's!

"And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" (3:15). What better gift to hungry sheep!

"And the prophets [false prophets] shall become wind, and the word is not in them" (5:13). *Vox et praeterea nihil*.

"The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?" (5:31). Destruction just ahead.

"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls" (6:16). God's summons to better days.

"For the pastors are become brutish" (10:21). A carnal pulpit makes a carnal people, and this soon ends in death.

"O the hope of Israel, the saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night?" (14:8). To the unknown God!

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (29:13). Finney's conversion text. Whole seeking means whole finding.

CHAPTER 25

LAMENTATIONS

Prophet of Weeping. Book of Tears

Key-word: "Weep"

Key-text: "She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks" (1:2)

Five chapters.

1. Tears for "the City."
2. Tears for "the daughter of Zion."
3. Tears for "the man that hath seen affliction."
4. Tears for "the precious sons of Zion."
5. Tears for "the orphans and fatherless."

Tears, Tears, Tears, nothing but Tears.

BUT thank God for the eyes that weep! "He preaches to the times," says Joseph Parker, "who preaches to broken hearts"; and he might have added, *out of a broken heart*. There is power in tears, they went before the Exodus, and before the Restoration. They introduce every great awakening. They are to be the prelude of the ultimate restitution. There is a call for them to-day.

Lamentations. God's bottle of tears in the midst of Israel's history of dearth and dryness. A little pause for weeping as the whirling years go by. Thank God for a pulpit that melts with sympathy and grief; and alas for the people that look up in these days of want, and never see wet eyes in the sacred desk! Said the deacon to Mr. Spurgeon one day, "Pastor, I believe there's going to be a blessing to-night: there's so much dew about."

There was reason for these tears in Jeremiah's day. A study of Jerusalem's annals brings it out. A good way to render these five elegies of Lamentations is to read them alternately with 2 Kings 25, the sad record of the days that ushered in the fall of the city, thus:

Lamentations 1; 2 Kings 25:1-7.

Lamentations 2; 2 Kings 25:8-13.

Lamentations 3; 2 Kings 25:14-21.

Lamentations 4; 2 Kings 25:22-26.

Lamentations 5; 2 Kings 25:27-30.

The facts force the tears.

Would a calm survey of the facts to-day justify else than weeping? Weeping and then working. For the men of tears are oftenest men of action, and action that counts. Strange to say, it is to Jeremiah the weeping prophet, the other-world prophet, that we must look for our best proof text for good citizenship and the Social Gospel. It might not seem so at first, as we read the sorrowful plaint at Jeremiah 51:9, "We would have healed Bablyon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country, for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies." The separatist's text. This at last for the world when her cup is full. But wait. Read with this Jeremiah 29:4-7, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives"; the program for these waiting days, "Build ye houses . . . plant gardens . . . and seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it; *for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.*" Partial peace, at least, till the final Peace! The best friend and helper of this sin-cursed and death-doomed world, while it lasts, is the faithful, yearning Christian passing through it, seeking peace and making peace, till comes the Prince of peace! Then, blessed be His name, an end of weeping, when "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes!"

MARGINAL NOTES

Jesus, we are ever to remember, was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He knew how to sympathize.

Keep looking ahead. Let your religion be not a goad but a goal.

Godly weeping is not fretting. To swear is wicked because it is taking God's name in vain; to fret is likewise wicked for it takes God's promises in vain.

The exact word of Scripture is important, for these prophets often did not themselves fully comprehend the message given them, and had to go to studying their own writings.—*H. L. Hastings.*

The Blessed Hope is never seen by some till it is discerned in the rainbow of tears.

Read in the original, this book in large part is seen to be a beautiful series of acrostic poems, the verses beginning with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

MARKED TEXTS

"Her tears are on her cheeks" (1:2). Thy jewels, Christians!

"She dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest" (1:3). Alas, for those who do.

"The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts" (1:4). Empty pews a provocative of grief.

"She came down wonderfully." Hebrew marvelously (1:9). The inexplicable come-down of a Spirit-filled church.

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?" (1:12.) Religious indifference.

"It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord" (3:26). "April, '04." Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord" (3:40). "Nov., '06." Personal waymarks—the blaze of Christian experience. Have you been this way yourself?

"Thou, O Lord, remainest" (5:19). The Remainder God! Blessed for ever more!

CHAPTER 26

EZEKIEL

Prophet of Visions. Book of Encouragement for Captive Saints

Key-word: "Visions"

Key-text: "As I was among the captives . . . the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God"

OUTLINE

1. Israel warned (before the destruction) (chaps. 1 to 24).
2. Israel comforted (after the destruction) (chaps. 25 to 48).

MEN of Israel, here is your book, your book for to-day. In the Providence of God and in fulfilment of his sure promises, your land, your city, your temple—it is wonderful—are being restored to you. Here are your chart and blueprint. Study the specifications, get ready to build.

And Christian, it is your book; your book of the times, for

when Israel returns the new world begins to dawn for us all. Half consciously but all graciously the Jew under God is the *avant courier* of the new dispensation. Every line he lays across the sacred sod, every stone he rears in the holy city, is a harbinger of glad Immanuel's land and the new Jerusalem, come down from heaven. Keep your eye on the measuring line and the trowel of the Zionist. He is building, at first, for himself and his nation, but ultimately for you and your King.

Does it seem strange to you that there is so little said of this great flaming book of visions in the Gospels and the Acts, or even in the Epistles, save faint flashlights here and there? Be not troubled. You will find the book of Revelation all aglow with its far-flung radiance. For Ezekiel, like John on Patmos, has to do with the things not yet fulfilled, but even now sending their benign and beckoning ways across the eastern horizon. Ezekiel looked forward to the restitution of the Jews, ushering in the final, glorious, though storm-wrought establishment of the Kingdom of Christ.

These two noble men of the college of inspiration link arms across the centuries, and look with one eye upon the unfolding of the new heavens and the new earth: Ezekiel, the prophet, who, peering forward with rapt, penetrating gaze spake, half whisperingly, the word—"And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it" (1:26); and John, the revelator, who with clearer vision and clearer utterance rings out the thrilling message: "And, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone" (Rev. 4:2, 3).

MARGINAL NOTES

Ezekiel, like Moses, stayed with the people and saw them through. His name, closely rendered, means bound-fast-to-God. He was literally, like the brave Admiral, "lashed to the mast."

Ezekiel was a priest and he always spake in priestly terms and from the midst of the sanctuary. This explains much of his imagery.

Jeremiah prophesied from Zion. Ezekiel from outside of Zion. One was, in spirit, home missionary; the other in a sense foreign. Both alike God's prophets.

MARKED TEXTS

"The word of the Lord came *expressly* unto Ezekiel the priest" (1:3). Like "verily, verily." Therefore cherish the word, the very word of inspiration.

"The spirit of the living creature was in the wheels" (1:20). The hiding of His power.

"One man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side" (9:2). Ye ancient and noble order of editors.

"Set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof" (9:4). A saving sign—the sign of the sigh.

"Yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come" (11:16). Comfort for that "shut in."

"I will bring him to Babylon . . . yet shall he not see it" (12:14.) Literally and sadly fulfilled in Zedekiah's case. His eyes had been made blind (2 Kings 25:7).

CHAPTER 27

DANIEL

Prophet of Dreams. Sunrise Book

Key-word: "Revealed"

Key-text: "Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision" (2:19)

OUTLINE

1. Historical (chaps. 1 to 6).
2. Prophetical (chaps. 7 to 12).

DANIEL, like Ezekiel, looks far. He is quoted most in Revelation. The echo of his voice is heard from Patmos Isle and Olive's brow. Yet his noble physiognomy is traced in the picture gallery of Hebrews 11, "stopped the mouths of lions." You cannot hide God's own.

He was great on earth, the historical portions of his own book hint it. And Ezekiel, nearest to him in his own day and therefore knowing him best, ranks him as one of the World's

Triumvirate of Virtue—Noah, Daniel, and Job (Ezek. 14:14; yet they could “deliver but their own souls by their righteousness”).

He was great in Heaven, for this fine distinction was his, that God broke the silence of the skies twice over, to cry out, “O man greatly beloved” (10:11, 19).

“And when he had spoken unto me,” says Daniel, quite naively, “I was strengthened.” Who would not be?

And this other high honor was his, that for his prayers, marvelous in cogency and power, a special angelic embassy was sent from the Throne, with the calm yet thrilling declaration, “I am come for thy words” (10:12).

He was the companion of kings. He was a leader of men. He was a pioneer in reform. He started the first real Total Abstinence Society (1:12). Daniel was indeed a great man.

But it is Daniel the prophet we consider here. This was his pre-eminence under God and among the children of men. He drew back the curtains and unveiled, as no man did before John the revelator, the hidden things of the future. Indeed, we are seeing more and more that his inspired writings were but the world's great annals, in anticipation—history before the event.

Daniel gives us five lines of symbolic history, or, as we call it, the future in prophecy:

1. The Great Image of chapter 2, depicting with wonderful accuracy the succession of the Babylonian, Indo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman Empires, the latter, in a way, not yet ended.

2. The Four Beasts of chapter 7, symbolizing again Babylonia, Persia, Greece, Rome. Persia is represented as a bear having three ribs in its teeth, i. e., Babylon, Lydia, Egypt. Greece has four heads, the four kingdoms Alexander left to his generals, Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy, and Seleucus. Rome's ten horns refer partly to the past, partly to the future, for history is making fast to-day, especially as regards the “little horn” with “eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things” (7:8). But the end is not yet. Presently the Ancient of Days! Then shall we know and understand.

3. The vision of the Ram and the He Goat (chap. 8), the minor relations of Persia and Greece, just prior to the New Testament period.

4. The Seventy Weeks of Israel's decline (chap. 9)—seventy times seven year-days, 490 years, Ezra to Christ, seven years of which, the final week, are yet to be added, for here the

Jew passes out of sight, not to appear again in Biblical Chronology till he at last returns to his rejected Lord.

5. The Great Kings (chap. 11). Partly fulfilled under Titus at the destruction of Jerusalem, partly to be fulfilled in stupendous events yet to occur.

MARGINAL NOTES

Ezekiel gave us the inside or spiritual aspect of coming events; Daniel gives us the outside or world view. Ezekiel spoke to the Jew; Daniel to the church at large.

Jesus gives Daniel his sufficient place and authority. "When ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet" (Matt. 24:15). "Whoso therefore readeth let him understand."

Ezra to Christ takes us back to 453 B. C. Add the thirty years of Christ's earthly life, and the seven final years, and we have 490 years, the prophetic seven times seventy.

In God's arithmetic, as Dr. A. T. Pierson traces it out, one represents singleness; two, co-operation or contrast; three, combined unity; four is the world number; seven, the sacred number; four plus three, earth and heaven, perfection, completion.

Keith says that seventy distinct prophecies of the Scripture are unwittingly confirmed by infidel writers and world travelers.

Daniel was, like Joseph, God's candle, shining in heathen darkness.

MARKED TEXTS

"There is not a man upon the earth that can shew the king's matter" (2:10). Seek then a man from Heaven—inspiration.

"Iron is not mixed with clay" (2:43). The present culminating crisis.

"And the form of the fourth is like the Son of God" (3:25).

"Lo, I am with you alway." Be calm; be glad.

"Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting" (5:27). God's balances test nations and individuals to-day.

"His windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem" (6:10). The hope of every age.

"By peace shall he destroy many" (9:25). Beware of a false peace.

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end" (12:3). Are not the seals loosed to-day? See Revelation 22:10.

CHAPTER 28

HOSEA

Prophet of Salvation. Backslider's Book

Key-word: "Return"

Key-text: "Come, and let us return unto the Lord; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up" (6:1)

OUTLINE

1. Personal (chaps. 1 to 3).
2. Israel (chaps. 4 to 14).

IT IS a voice from the North, where Israel dwelt. Jeroboam II was their king, while Uzziah was reigning over Judah in Jerusalem. Amos had just spoken. Isaiah was about to begin. It was a time of apostasy. Return! return! is the prophet's cry. A needed cry—Return unto God, and He will return unto you!

Hosea, whose name means salvation, was Poet Laureate unto the king. But he was more than that; he was God's voice to the people. Hence, he uttered a message that many of them did not care to hear. His appeal was in behalf of an incensed God and to a backslidden nation. "O Israel," he cried, "return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity" (14:1).

Domestic trial accentuates his message—an unfaithful wife—and there are tears in his voice and pathos and tragedy in his life. But he has thrown himself wholly into his redemptive mission, and his message and prayer are one: "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thine help" (13:9).

And there is but one way; the way for all backsliders—confession and humiliation; penitence and purification. "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy" (10:12).

"Hear the word of the Lord," is Hosea's constant refrain, and he holds the people, then as now, to God's truth and God's righteousness; so only shall they find God's mercy. In days of spiritual declension that preacher is kindest to God's people who is truest to God's Word. It is not more latitude or more

liberty we need to-day, but more loyalty. Thus only come blessedness and peace to any generation.

MARGINAL NOTES

Get back to God. A weed is a plant out of place.

"Who best can suffer,
Best can do."—*Milton*.

Do not give God clay models, but plastic clay.

"God cannot do anything with an uncommitted will."—*Gordon*.

Ephraim was the man who had "too much to give up"—and he lost it all.

Alexander's torch burning at the gates was a signal that his enemies had still a chance to return. "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you" (John 12:35).

God's Word is a mirror. What is a mirror rightly for? To see how well you look? No—speaking as a man—to see how illy you look! to see what is wrong, and then to correct it. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word" (Psa. 119:9).

MARKED TEXTS

"She did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal" (2:8). Man's ungrateful and wicked perversion of God's gifts.

"The earth shall bear the corn, and the wine, and the oil" (2:22). The prayer of the corn. One prayer "without ceasing."

"Israel slideth back as a backsliding heifer" (4:16). The picture is of the cattle slipping as they graze on the steep hill-sides of Palestine. Watch your step here below.

"Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone" (4:17). Nay, Lord: anything but that—to be let alone of God!

"I will make Ephraim to ride [properly, *draw*]; Judah shall plow, and Jacob shall break his clods" (10:11). No more slackers.

"I will be as the dew unto Israel" (14:5). "His mercy endureth for ever."

CHAPTER 29

· JOEL

Prophet of the Spirit. Book of Pentecost

Key-word: "Trumpet"

Key-text: "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion" (2:1)

OUTLINE

Three great chapters: Fast; Feast; Fanfare.

1. Trumpet of warning.
2. Trumpet of promise.
3. Trumpet of blessing.

HERE come the locusts—be warned! Yes, but here comes the Breath of God—be strengthened! And, finally, here comes the Day of the Lord—rest and be glad!

Those locusts were typical of other judgments and calamities yet to appear. And, thank God, that heaven-sent deliverance was anticipative of other re-enforcements from the skies, to come in due time. It was indeed the prophecy of Pentecost, which is in turn the foretaste of millennial joys.

"I believe in the Holy Ghost!" Have you got it in your personal creed? It has slipped out of the practical doctrine of many; hence our emptiness and dearth. Joel knew the Power: "Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do great things" (2:21).

Joel appears just a little before Hosea; only he speaks to the Southern, as Hosea speaks to the Northern tribes. But his message is to us all to-day.

"Be still," he says, "be still, O people! Quiet your horrid wrangling and jangling. Listen a moment to God's voice. Cease from your pitiful dinning and doing. Give the Almighty a chance, and see the salvation of our God!"

Hear it again. Let it speak in these vexed days from the White House and the pulpit; yet, ultimately, from the skies:

"Blow the trumpet in Zion,

Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly;

Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders,

Gather the children, and those that suck the breasts;

Let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber,
 And the bride out of her closet.
 Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch
 and the altar.
 And let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord,
 And give not thine heritage to reproach,
 That the heathen should rule over them:
 Wherefore should they say among the people,
 Where is their God?"

"Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove,
 With all thy quickening power."

MARGINAL NOTES

Joel was a kind of an oldtime Evan Roberts. "Catch the flame!"

The paramount need of to-day in pulpit and pew is the power of the Holy Ghost.

Recall those weaklings at Ephesus, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost!" Is this ancient history, only?

There is such a thing as the personal dispensation of the Holy Ghost. He influences all, He regenerates and sanctifies every believer; but He fills and empowers only those who consciously and joyously accept and obey Him. "Whom God hath given to them that obey him," said Peter (Acts 5:32).

Peter and Joel clasp hands across the centuries. "This is that," said Peter, in significant phrase at Pentecost, and he bowed to this great "son of Pethuel." The prophet of the Old, and of the New.

And yet Pentecost was not all "that" of which Joel spake. It was but the first dropping of the coming shower. The floods of refreshing will be ours—when the King comes in!

MARKED TEXTS

"A fire devoureth before them" (2:3). The scourge of the locusts. How are you going to meet them? Sweep them back with a broom? That is the pitiful, puerile way of the world to-day. Nay, call upon the Spirit of the living God. *Fight fire with Fire!*

"I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh" (2:28). Why then are not all filled with the Spirit to-day? "If thou believest, thou mayest," said Philip of another but similar baptism. Believe, obey, and receive!—the personal element.

"In those days will I pour out my spirit" (2:29). Those

days are come. No need now to try to tarry and implore—take and be blessed. But, remember, the vessel must be clean.

“What I yield, God takes; what God takes, he cleanses and fills; what God fills, he uses.”—*J. Wilbur Chapman.*

AMOS

CHAPTER 30

The Farmer Prophet. Book of the Plumbline

Key-word: “Plumbline”

Key-text: “And the Lord said unto me, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A plumbline” (7:8)

OUTLINE

1. Against the Nations (chaps. 1 and 2).
2. Against Israel (chaps. 3 to 6).
3. For Israel (chaps. 7 to 9).

NO PUTTY here; no velvet touch. Amos was a man of the fields, a herdsman of Tekoa, and he spoke out plainly, bluntly.

God called him, lariat in hand, and sent him forth to round up his straying people.

Men need such dealing at times when iniquity abounds. We get to be so tender and gentle with the darling sins of the people. We forget how to denounce, we lose the power of righteous wrath, we weakly deplore the imprecatory Psalms. They are too rough and rude for this nice age—nicely destined for the pit!

Not so with Amos. Plumbline prophet was he. And the plumbline always makes a crooked wall along which it is dropped look crooked. And the crooked wall always hates the straight line. And they hated Amos; and they will hate you, if you speak out. Nevertheless, speak, though it cost you your head.

Hear them—“Also Amaziah said unto Amos, O thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and

prophecy there; but prophecy not again any more at Bethel, for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court." As much as to say, "We want no such preaching here. This is the king's chapel." "King's chapel," forsooth! Bethel means *God's Chapel*. Hypocrisy! Sacrilege!

And now hear Amos' withering scorn—"Come to Bethel, and transgress; at Gilgal multiply transgression; and bring your sacrifices every morning . . . for this liketh you [is like you], O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord God" (4:4, 5). Whited sepulchers! Oh, for another Amos!

MARGINAL NOTES

Recall here the Man with the scourge of small cords, purging his temple.

David went down to see his brethren, one time, with a basket of bread and cheese on his arm, and God did with him what he sometimes does with his undershepherds to-day—struck the basket of bread and cheese away, for the nonce, and put in his hand a sword. That was when Goliath met his match.

Said the pope's delegate at the edge of the flame, "I separate thee from the Church." Quoth brave, fearless Savonarola, God's man: "From the church militant, but not from the church triumphant!" and went to his reward.

"And now, Lord," said the beleagured disciples, in Acts 4:29, "behold their threatenings; and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word." God's to take care of the threatening: ours to attend to the preaching. The Lord helping us, that we will do!

Barnard's Lincoln, standing there in Cincinnati, plain, rugged, brave. The writer never passes it without touching his hat. Take off your hat to Amos, God's Commoner in his day!

MARKED TEXTS

"Two years before the earthquake" (1:1). The earthquake of God's wrath is always just ahead.

"For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof" (2:1). Poetic refrain. When the cup of iniquity is full, God speaks. No nation can persistently break his laws with impunity.

"Shall there be evil [hurt] in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" (3:6). The judgment side of sorrow and suffering.

"I will send a famine in the land—a famine . . . of hearing the words of the Lord" (8:11). How far off is it? Heedless hearing invites it.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper" (9:13). After the famine a feast. When the Lord shall gather his own. God, hasten the day!

"I will sift the house of Israel among all nations" (9:9). Literally fulfilled. He is there to-day, the Jew, waiting for the final call. Watch! Listen!

CHAPTER 31

OBADIAH

Prophet of Deliverance. Book of Possessions

Key-word: "Possess"

Key-text: "But upon Mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions" (v. 17)

OUTLINE

1. Doom for Edom (vs. 1-16).
2. Deliverance for Zion (vs. 17-21).

HERE is the bard of one song, a song of twenty-one verses. But it has two cantos: one of doom to the proud and rebellious; the other of deliverance to the meek and lowly.

It is directed to Edom and Zion as representing the two sons of Isaac's loins, Esau and Jacob. Yet it appeals to us all, with our two tendencies and two natures: the earthly Esau on the one side, bold and haughty; and the spiritual Jacob on the other, renewed and sanctified of God.

The occasion of this poem is written on its face, and we readily find the time of its composition. "In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that the strangers carried away captive his forces, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem." It was that terrible day, doubtless when Nebuchadnezzar finally laid hands on fair Zion and reduced it to dust and ashes (588 B. C.).

What a denunciation of the selfish, indifferent, presently truculent spirit of near-by Edom, which, in the attitude of Esau, held aloof and allowed Jerusalem to be despoiled, and so became *particeps criminis* in her destruction, getting indeed gain out of her loss.

Notice the progress of guilt here. Seven steps of the neutral or do-nothing policy (vs. 11 to 14). 1. "In the day that thou *stoodest on the other side*,"—positive aloofness. 2. "Thou shouldst not have *looked on* the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger," *i. e.*, heedlessly looking on at a neighbor's calamity. 3. "Neither shouldst thou have *rejoiced over* the children of Judah in the day of their destruction." This is what Paul speaks of in 1 Corinthians 13:6 as *rejoicing in iniquity*. 4. "Neither shouldst thou have *spoken proudly* in the day of distress,"—the Pharisaic posture of better-than-thou. 5. "Thou shouldst not have *entered into* the gate of my people in the day of their calamity,"—wicked indifference leading to participation in wrong-doing. 6. "Nor have *laid hands* on their substance in the day of their calamity,"—graft and greed coming in, soon, to exploit others' woes. And finally, 7. "Neither shouldst thou have *delivered up* those of his that did remain in the day of distress,"—open partnership in evil and cruelty.

But on the other hand, how glorious at last Jacob's estate, under God! "Upon mount Zion shall be deliverance." Mount Zion is the symbolic residence of piety and trust; our, Redeemer is there. "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. . . . Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (Psa. 2:6-8).

MARGINAL NOTES

Possess thy possessions—this the work of a believing church and of a consecrated life. Alas, for most of us how vast the regions undiscovered, the capacities undeveloped—*Amplius! Amplius!*

Door-mat Christians—do you know them? They knock at the door but never enter, uncomfortable themselves—and making others uncomfortable, *i. e.*, those on the inside. Come in—or stay out!

There, too, are the *Porter's Lodge* Christians. Given access to the manor and palace, they camp at the gates and get no farther. Where are you?

MARKED TEXTS

"And the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions" (v. 17). The Douay says: "The house of Jacob shall possess those that possessed them." The tables turned—captivity made captive. Hasten the day!

"And saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau" (v. 21). Fulfilled in a measure preventively in such men as Luther and Wesley, but finally and fully in the day of the Lord. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" (1 Cor. 6:2.) "And the kingdom shall be the Lord's." Thank God! thank God—at last!

CHAPTER 32

JONAH

Missionary Prophet. Book of God's Mercy

Key-word: "Arise: Go"

Key-text: "Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee" (3:2)

OUTLINE

1. The Bane of Obduracy (chaps. 1 and 2).
2. The Blessings of Obedience (chaps. 3 and 4).

THIS is the earliest book in the prophetic Calendar, dating back to Israel's first kings, and it teaches a very simple lesson: God is God, and it does not pay to resist Him. And the companion lesson, God is Good: it is better to trust Him than to trust man.

Here is the test book of the Bible. It challenges our faith. What we do with Jonah determines our standing with God, and his church. The religion of Christ—is it naturalism or supernaturalism? This determines our attitude. Here we stand or fall.

There are three ways to deal with the book of Jonah: 1. Reject it. Very well. You will have an easy time with the

Athenians, who will listen kindly till the resurrection is broached. But you will not walk with Paul, nor with Paul's Christ, who is the risen Lord. 2. Ignore it. Very well, we say again, if you wish to ignore all miracle, and be yourself ignored of the miracle-working God. 3. Accept it and abide by it. This do, if you wish to lay a basis for the evangelic doctrines of faith and hope and love, and for the practice of the Presence of God.

In fact, the book of Jonah is the first far note of "God so loved the world." And Jonah himself is the first Israelite who wrestled with and at last yielded, missionary-wise, to its sweet constraint.

Christ put his hand of authentication upon this book, and then laid himself in the tomb with the calm word, "As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. 12:40). The resurrection vindicates Christ and Jonah together; the two are linked across the centuries.

Two things doubtless hindered Jonah when bidden to go to Nineveh—his pride of self, and his scorn of the rest of the race. God took it out of him in the whale's belly. When he has smitten it out of the mind and heart of Jonah's kinsmen, now for a season under the darkness of the veil, Israel will become, like Jonah, a mighty missionary force, and preach repentance to the ends of the earth.

But there is naught to hinder the Christian, if he be a Christian, a Christ-man to-day. "Arise, go to Nineveh," said God to Jonah, and he fled to Tarshish. "Arise, and go toward . . . Gaza," said the Voice to Philip, the Christian Evangelist. "And he arose and went." It was the day of the sovereign Spirit. When the Church of Christ responds as promptly to the "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel," we shall see a nation converted in a day, and resurrection miracles of grace and glory.

MARGINAL NOTES

Jonah is himself the prophetic man—acted prophecy; Easter's prelude. If you leave out Jonah what do you miss? The first distant flashlights of Incarnation, Atonement, Resurrection, and the precious Gospel of Grace to all mankind. That were a tremendous loss to the church of Christ.

You "can't swallow Jonah"? Who asked you to? God prepared a great fish for that. If he could plan a soft bed for Lazarus in the bosom of the flinty rock, he could make

ready a resting-place for Jonah in the fluid sea. He is God! The miracle-working God! Who are you?

Above all, do not disobey God. Where is the Jew to-day? In moral parentheses, for his disobedience. It is a kind of whale's belly, a temporary *tomb of spiritual desuetude*, till he learn his lesson. Then when the word of the Lord comes "the second time" he will preach as bidden, and men will hear as never before. We are looking and longing for that day!

MARKED TEXTS

"The Lord had prepared a great fish" (1:17). The same Lord that had "sent out a great wind" (1:4). Wind or whale—God prepared them both.

"Salvation is of the Lord" (2:9). And of no one else, not Jonah, not any one, but God. Turn to Him.

"Preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee" (3:2). Peter obeyed. Lo, Pentecost!

CHAPTER 33

MICAH

The Herald Prophet. Book of the Watch Tower

Key-word: "Hear"

Key-text: "Hear, all ye people; hearken, O earth, and all that therein is; and let the Lord God be witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple" (1:2)

OUTLINE

1. Judgment (chaps. 1 to 3).
2. Mercy (chaps. 4 to 7).

IT IS a watchman's cry on the still air of the night, a voice partly of warning and partly of expectation. Ahaz is reigning for a while (741 B. C.). Then Hezekiah (726 B. C.). Hence the mingled judgment and promise. Micah speaks God's voice from the Watch Tower, and it is true and faithful, admonition to sinners, comfort to saints.

For convenience we may characterize and distinguish the chapters, as seven clear ringing notes on God's bell in the Watch Tower:

Chapter 1. *A note of warning.* "Behold, the Lord cometh forth out of his place, and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth" (1:3). Ever and anon God comes forth in signal manifestations of his displeasure to rebuke the sins of men. He is here to-day in solemn controversy among the nations.

Chapter 2. *A note of wrath.* "Woe to them that devise iniquity." The evil devices of men, whereby "they covet fields, and take them by violence," calls down the lightning of God's righteous judgment.

Chapter 3. *A note of threatening.* "Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel; Is it not for you to know judgment?" (3:1.) Judgment must begin at the house of the Lord.

Chapter 4. *A note of promise.* "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established" (4:1). A sweet, remembered song (see Isa. 2:2, 3).

Chapter 5. *A note of announcement.* "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth" (5:2). Here is where the Wise-men got their clue to the manger Child.

Chapter 6. *A note of instruction.* "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to *do justly*, and to *love mercy*, and to *walk humbly* with thy God?" (6:8). *Noblesse oblige.*

Chapter 7. *A note of hope.* "Therefore I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me" (7:7). He is close at hand! Speak your message—and rest!

MARGINAL NOTES

"What have you gotten for your pains?" So they said to Whitefield one time when he came back to his room after an apparently ineffectual reproof to some swearers near by. "A quiet pillow," he answered, and lay down to sleep.

"The finger of Providence was upon me."—*Wellington at Waterloo.*

Too many of us lack the strength of our convictions. "Some preachers," Dr. P. S. Henson, that doughty little giant of the

pulpit, used to say, "could not think of throwing a brickbat—it would hurt their dainty fingers!"

"Only, only, only God!"—*Dr. Mason.*

Micah means *like God*. The prophet is the man who reminds his generation of the Eternal God. Keep close to the Throne.

MARKED TEXTS

"Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest" (2:10). "Here is rest," said the Indian, as he cast his spear into the earth and gave name to *Alabama*. We rest not till we reach Calvary.

"If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood do lie . . . he shall even be the prophet of this people" (2:11). Like prophet, like people. We are not without sad evidence of it to-day.

"Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion" (4:11). We shall understand better the derision of this word when we recall what David Baron tells us, that Zion originally meant *emptiness, drought*.

"Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham" (7:20). Fear not, Abraham and Jacob are still alive and waiting their covenant reward. We shall share it with them. God hath promised!

CHAPTER 34

NAHUM

World's Prophet. Book of the Burden

Key-word: "A Jealous God"

Key-text: "'God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth" (1:2)

OUTLINE

Judged (chap. 1).

Sentenced (chap. 2).

Executed (chap. 3).

NINEVEH is the culprit here and Nahum is sent forth to declare God's righteous judgment.

But judging Nineveh, he judges all the world, that lieth in the wicked one.

"Burden" it is called, and a burden it is that rests rightly on the heart of every preacher of righteousness. We must speak against iniquity wherever it lifts its imperious head—at home or abroad.

Yet Nineveh was soon storming at the gates. The enemy of God is always the enemy of God's people, and his iniquity presently takes effect on Zion's wall. Ultimately he will be settled with by Zion's God. Fear not—speak the word!

Nineveh is the world's object-lesson of the doom of impiety. There she stood rich and powerful, but morally rotten. Within a hundred years after the prophecy (606 B. C.) her walls were dust, her stately palaces were ashes. She is a sand heap, to-day, an Absalom's pillar, to cast a stone at. It does not pay to despise God.

Here is a remarkable commentary on the First Psalm. "The ungodly are not so; but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly *shall perish*." Where is Nineveh?

It hints the unpardonable sin. Jonah preached to Nineveh, and she repented. Nahum spoke, and she was obdurate. Her cup of iniquity was at last full. The people or the soul that

deliberately and finally rejects God, deliberately and finally and fatally elects doom. Beware!

Hear Peter's burden spoken to later generations. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing [wishing] that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Pet. 3:9, 10). "Be ye also ready."

MARGINAL NOTES

Nahum means *to sigh* or *to grieve*. Who can look upon a lost world without feeling Nahum's burden?

Preach the Prophets. See the vivid narrative here. Try Professor Burnham's plan of sketching rapidly the situation and the scene, then reading aloud the prophecy. It is a veritable sermon from the throne.

"The tongue of the prophet must be clean." "Let me see your tongue," says the family doctor. "Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin purged," said the angel (Isa. 6:7). *Lip sin.*—A. J. Gordon.

"Charcoal is carbon in humiliation; the diamond is carbon in glory."—*Pierson*.

Speak to the people: speak *for* the people. Be kind and true. "No cake for one, till all have bread," say the English workmen.

"For Philip's eye" was the label on the arrow of the Greek. Aim your message.

MARKED TEXTS

"The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked" (1:3). God sees, God notes, God will recompense. The God of judgment.

"The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him" (1:7). Again, God sees, God hears, and God delivers. The God of mercy.

"Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!" (1:15). A flashlight of hope on the judgment cloud. "And there was a rainbow round about the throne" (Rev. 4:3). "Art thou better than populous No [Thebes], that was situate among the rivers?" (3:8). Let

the centuries give answer—no better—utterly vanished and gone!

“Thy shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria” (3:18). The world’s hirelings, drunken and ineffectual.

CHAPTER 35

HABAKKUK

Prophet of Hope. Book of Light in Darkness

Key-word: “Faith”

Key-text: “The just shall live by his faith” (2:4)

OUTLINE

Watch and see (chap. 1).

Stand and see (chap. 2).

Kneel and see (you see farthest on your knees) (chap. 3).

THIS is the prophet who saw “Light in the darkness,” the motto of the Moravian brethren. Wickedness and wretchedness all about the seer, but as by faith he lifted his gaze there was light ahead! It was the time of Chaldea’s supremacy and Israel’s low estate (630 B. C.), but the eyes of Habakkuk were unto the hills, and he caught the glinting of the light. He is the type of the true shepherd of the sheep, who in gloomy days ever lifts the heart of his people to the sure mercies of God.

Habakkuk is the prophet who sang in the night, and he is to be remembered, if for nothing else, for the magnificent climax of ecstatic melody with which his prophecy closes:

“Although the fig tree shall not blossom,
Neither shall fruit be in the vines;
The labor of the olive shall fail,
And the fields shall yield no meat;
The flock shall be cut off from the fold,
And there shall be no herd in the stalls:
Yet I will rejoice in the Lord,
I will joy in the God of my salvation!”

Look up, beleaguered soul, and be glad in the Lord.

MARGINAL NOTES

"To my mind the Bible is not true in spots, but true and trustworthy from beginning to end."—*David Burrell*.

Kant and Fichte taught that God is necessary as a preliminary basis of thought.

One not a Christian said, If there were no God, we would need to create one for the ends of society.

Feed on the Word. Loss of appetite is as bad a symptom spiritually as it is physically.

"The Spirit does not make us wise above what is written, but as to what is written."—*Chalmers*.

"Joy, and temperance and repose,
Slam the door on the doctor's nose."

—*Old German*.

"We are strangers on earth with God but not *to* God.

The *just* (Romans) shall *live* (Hebrews) by his *faith* (Galatians). An illuminated Scripture.

MARKED TEXTS

"The burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see" (1:1). The man of the far sight. Lord, give us more of them in the pulpit, and everywhere.

"For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans" (1:6 cf. 2 Chronicles 36). "The wicked work the righteous will of heaven."

"O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God [Margin, *Rock*], thou hast established them for correction" (1:12). The nations are God's object lessons, illustrating the moral law.

"Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high" (2:9). The sin of the profiteer—the man who in hard times "looks out for number one," and thinks to "live on easy street."

"Revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy" (3:2). The revival note. Bring it in—always.

"There was the hiding of his power" (3:4). Back of all—God!

"Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed" (3:13). The hidden meaning of all God's acts. The redemption of God's own is the clue to history.

"He will make me to walk upon mine high places." "To the *chief* singer on my stringed instruments" (3:19). Catch the note, the high note of prophetic song. You get it at the glory throne—nowhere else.

CHAPTER 36

ZEPHANIAH

Judgment Prophet. Book of the Day of the Lord

Key-word: "Search"

Key-text: "I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish them that are settled upon their lees" (1:12)

OUTLINE

1. Search Judah (chap. 1).
2. Search the Nations (chap. 2).
3. Search Zion (chap. 3).

PICTORIALLY and graphically, this is the Prophet of the Candle. Habakkuk stood high and looked far. Zephaniah stoops low with the candle and looks close. Both prophets are required in days when men need to be brought back to the truth.

Zephaniah was Josiah's right-hand helper in the days of the great reform (630 B. C.), and he held the torch up against Israel's apostasies and idolatries, to enable the king to strike strong, effective blows. He was like Cromwell's Milton.

Such a man terribly vexes this old world in its sins. They call him a troubler, a meddler, and they try to silence him. But if it were not for his admonitory voice, this old earth would soon slide into the pit. Let sin go on, and it will swamp any civilization. Smite it, denounce it, and there is some hope—till comes the final judgment.

But the magic message here is the Day of the Lord. Looking close, the prophet beholds its approach, and he lifts his shout of joy. Put your ear to the Book and its echo rings from all the prophets. "Watchman, what of the night?"

Watchman, what of the night? The morning cometh, and also the night!" For the waiting Christian, glorious morn; but for you sinners, proud and insolent—night, awful, remediless night!

MARGINAL NOTES

Richard Storrs said, "*Thus saith the Lord* has come to mean—*Thus saith somebody*, nobody knows who, as reported by somebody else, of the correctness of whose report we cannot be certain."

"Mere comment is not exposition. It is like climbing a tree and running out on every branch, or like opening and shutting a door, without going in."—*Marvin Vincent*.

"His faithfulness is met by my faith; his truth by my trust."
—*Griffith Thomas*.

"Good emphasis is good exposition."

The King James Bible was translated in the frank, free speech of Shakespearean days, and for every so-called indelicate syllable of Holy Writ you will find ten such words in Shakespeare.

Here are some Christian paradoxes:

To forgive is to be forgiven.

To give is to get.

To be weak is to be strong.

To be nothing is to have everything.

Mozart used to translate all his boyish experiences, his trips, etc., into music; so the prophet and the preacher with his message.

Some one says, "I never yet got any great victory over sin until I saw how it grieved my Father."

The prophet or seer is like a geyser boiling over. God's Word must have vent.

MARKED TEXTS

"I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place" (1:4). Josiah's great reform—the time mark of Zephaniah.

"The day of the Lord is at hand" (1:7). Spoken three times in this one chapter. It is always at hand—God's imminent judgment.

"That say in their heart, The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil" (1:12). The *laissez faire* attitude of the world, *i. e.*, "It makes no difference." "God does not care!" God *does* care; and men are finding it out to-day, to their sorrow!

"Every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not" (3:5). To fail here; to be silent over iniquity, or to refrain to denounce at once open sin, is to compound with villainy and to invite disaster.

"For then will I turn to the people a pure language" (3:9). Cleanse your speech. Blot out the very language of sin.

"I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord" (3:12). The hope of every nation, *e. g.*, the Huguenots of France.

"He will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing" (3:17). "My Lord and I!"

CHAPTER 37

HAGGAI

Prophet of the Restoration. Builder's Book

Key-word: "Build"

Key-text: "Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord" (1:8)

OUTLINE

1. Admonitory (chap. 1).
2. Hortatory (chap. 2).

IT IS the first voice after the captivity (500 B. C.). Haggai is sent to call the people to the restoration of the dismantled temple. He is one of the first of the goodly company of church builders who ever help forward the work of the Lord. Build! Build! is his cry.

His name means *festive*, and the man who undertakes the building of a church leads always a festival procession: it should be a work of praise and joy.

Yet it is not an easy task. The people late returned from captivity, and building "ceiled houses" for their wives and children, were naturally reluctant to assume new burdens. Some one must stir up their languid piety and devotion; some

one not readily repulsed. Such a man was Haggai, prophet of the Lord.

But Haggai had some noble helpers. There was Darius, the king, whom, like Cyrus before him, God had raised up from the outside, to stimulate the enterprise. There, a little later, were Ezra and Nehemiah to push the work along. And just now at his side were Zerubbabel, the pious governor of the city, and Joshua the High Priest, and, best of all, his companion prophet Zechariah, painting glorious pictures of the future.

Undertake great things for God: you will not be alone.

The admonition is "Consider your ways" (twice repeated), *i. e.*, be reasonable. Give God at least that which is as good as what you give yourselves.

And the exhortation is, "Be strong" (thrice repeated), "yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work: for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts" (2:4).

MARGINAL NOTES

Ezra, in his narrative, looks back on these events of the Restoration; Zechariah looks forward from them; Haggai looks around about upon them.

In the chronology of the Restoration Zerubbabel comes first, following Cyrus' decree of return, 536 B. C., starting at once upon the temple. Checked by the adversaries of Judah for sixteen years, the work is resumed under Haggai and Zechariah, 520 B. C., and finished by Zerubbabel in the sixth year of Darius, 515 B. C. Ezra came later, in 457 B. C., to perfect the temple service, and Nehemiah, still later, in 440 B. C., to complete the walls of the city.

Two things are glorious while we wait for the final glory: a heart full of praise; a church full of people.

There is a parable of creation in the genesis of a sermon. At first it is "without form, and void." Then the Spirit of God moves upon it, and lo, it lives! Now you can preach it, not before.

Build for God. Dr. George C. Lorimer used to say every man should leave behind him something that lasts: builded for God!

MARKED TEXTS

"Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house" (1:9). Which shall be first—yours or God's? The test of piety.

"So my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not" (2:5). But when that spirit is removed, then we *may* fear.

"And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come" (2:7).

"The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts; and in this place will I give peace" (2:9). Glory and peace! They arrive together at last.

CHAPTER 38

ZECHARIAH

Prophet of Final Things. Book of the Future

Key-word: "Light"

Key-text: "But it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light" (14:7)

OUTLINE

1. Symbols (chaps. 1 to 6).
2. Searchings (chaps. 7, 8).
3. Signs (chaps. 9 to 14).

THIS is a kind of Old Testament Book of Revelation. Zechariah speaks from the Patmos isle of the old dispensation, and, though dimly, he has the same seraphic visions that John saw, this side the resurrection.

He lived at the same time as Haggai, but he had builded him a house farther up the mount; his eye was caught by the larger vistas.

To read these visions aright you must get the two lights upon them: the light of the cross and the light of the crown. Otherwise they will be like the opaque pictures of the Japanese—without background, without perspective.

Do not enter this gallery without God's are light, the light of the Lamb in the midst of the throne. Happy the Christian so equipped: "Joy unspeakable, and full of glory!"

There are eight great visions here:

1. The vision of the horses in the valley (chap. 1).
2. The vision of the man with the measuring line (chap. 2).
3. The vision of the Angel of the Lord (chap. 3).
4. The vision of the golden candlestick (chap. 4).
5. The vision of the flying roll (chap. 5).
6. The vision of the four chariots (chap. 6).
7. The vision of the streets of the city (chap. 8).
8. The vision of the Lord standing on the Mount of Olives (chap. 14).

And remember the vision was not alone for Zechariah, but for us, and the purpose of revelation is to *reveal*.

MARGINAL NOTES

The prophet, looking far, saw the Christ of the days to come as one divine man, but in two aspects: now in humiliation and suffering, now in majesty and glory.

The Jew ignores the Christ of the Cross; the Christian, too often, the Christ of the Crown. Which is worse?

Go not to excess, but let the glint of glory be in all teachings and preachings. The people want it, the truth requires it, God expects it—and God will bless it!

The chapters of Zechariah are a chaplet of fourteen gems, each flashing with the ineffable light of the throne.

MARKED TEXTS

"I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease" (1:15). To be lost is sad, but to be lost and satisfied therewith is worse. It is grief to God.

"Run, speak to this young man" (2:4). We shall understand this Scripture better when we observe that the prophet himself is the young man to whom the Angel is bidden to speak and show him the truth. A good text for ordination.

"Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" (3:2.) Primarily Jerusalem, being plucked out to-day. But every Christian is a plucked brand. Be humble and thankful.

"Behold, I will bring forth my servant the Branch" (3:8). The Messiah, spoken of as "the dayspring" at Luke 1:78.

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (4:6). Pentecost!

"He shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it!" (4:7). All Israel shall join in the song of redemption at last when the King comes in (Rom. 11:26).

"These are the two anointed ones," margin, *Sons of Oil* (4:14). Joshua the priest and Zerubbabel the ruler. Pulpit and pew both consecrate. Text for Laymen's Day.

"He shall be a priest upon his throne" (6:13). Priest-King: encouragement for the preacher.

"Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope" (9:12). Israel at last brought back.

"I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them" (10:8). Literally, "whistle for them." The Shepherd calling up at last his lost and far-scattered sheep.

"So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver" (11:12). The blood mark of Zechariah? Compare 13:6.

"They shall look upon me whom they have pierced" (12:10). Israel's return—"It draweth nigh."

"And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives" (14:4). Our Lord's literal return: "This same Jesus."

CHAPTER 39

MALACHI

The Last of the Prophets. Sunset Book

Key-word: "Heal"

Key-text: "But unto you that fear my name shall the Son of righteousness arise with healing in his wings" (4:2)

OUTLINE

1. Purified (chaps. 1 and 2).
2. Pacified (chaps. 3 and 4).

"Twilight and evening bell,
And after that—the dark!"

BUT in the dark a gleam of light. God will not leave his people without hope. This torch lighted the way between, and the Valley of the Shadow, 'twixt the Old and the New Testaments, was not wholly night. There was always the promise of the day-dawn.

Malachi was the last voice before the long silence. And like all the prophets he spoke faithfully, partly in rebuke of Israel's sins, partly in reminder of Israel's redemption.

Malachi wrote in the closing days of Nehemiah, a hundred and more years after the captivity, when the first enthusiasm of the return from Babylon had spent itself. The people had grown careless and indifferent, and they needed a strong word to arouse them from their lethargy. Their sins had taken the form of selfishness and cupidity and consequent impiety. "Will a man rob God?" is Malachi's bold challenge.

Chapter 1. A robbed altar, "polluted bread" (v. 7).

Chapter 2. A robbed pulpit, "Ye have corrupted the covenant" (v. 8).

Chapter 3. A robbed treasury, "in tithes and offerings" (v. 8).

But chapter 4 is robbed darkness; "This is the Lord's doing."

For God is better than man, and we see here captivity turned and righteousness bestowed. "His mercy endureth forever." In other words, Malachi's recurrent cry is: "Back to God's

house! Back to God's word! Back to God's work! Back to God's grace!"

The last word of the book, like the first, is a warning; but the spirit of the whole is a song of hope and cheer; and when four hundred years have passed, and the sweet music of the skies dips earthward again to the waiting shepherds on the hillside, lo, it is the same yearning strain as of old, and prophet and angel are now in herald tones chanting the one jubilant song,

"Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace,
Good will toward men."

MARGINAL NOTES

Malachi, like 2 Chronicles, is a kind of Biblical watershed, where the streams divide, flowing on one side toward the fair Eden that was, and on the other side toward the better Eden that is to be.

"Liberal theology and true [Biblical] theology meet and part at a signboard marked 'sin.'"—*Taylor*.

The real objection to the Bible, some one has said, is a troubled conscience, growing out of a bad heart.

"Believest thou the prophets?" (Acts 26:27.) Let Paul's appeal come to-day to the pulpit of the land. If you believe the prophets, then preach the prophets; denounce the evil, pronounce the hope!

And to the laity: If you believe the prophets, then obey the prophets. Turn from your sins; accept the Christ!

MARKED TEXTS

"From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles" (1:11). God's great program: the optimism of the skies.

"The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity" (2:6). Bunyan's text: "The marks of a good minister of Jesus Christ: preaching the truth; living the life; saving the lost."

"Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple" (3:1). An instance of progressive prophecy. An early fulfilment in Isaiah (40:3); a larger ful-

filment in John at Jordan (Matt. 3:3); and who can say there is not a greater fulfilment yet to be? (cf. Rev. 11.)

Professor Ira M. Price, of Chicago, happily represents such gradual fulfilments by two fingers spread apart: the text of promise at the angle, the larger and larger answers at the knuckles and the finger-ends.

"Pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (3:10). Hebrew, "*until there be no lack.*" God's side of it. He opens the windows, *i. e.*, the sluice-ways of heaven, and empties us out a blessing till, as David Baron says, there is, as it were, *nothing left*: He gives the whole!

"And a book of remembrance was written" (3:16). God's memory book. Who are in it? Certainly those who fear the Lord and think on His Name may know.

"In that day when I make up my jewels" (3:17). Day of Christ; *day of discernment*. Then all the world shall know.

"Behold, the day cometh" (4:1). Good-night to the prophets; good-morn to the Christ!

CHAPTER 40

THE GOSPELS AND EPISTLES

Key-thought: "Come"

Key-text: "Come; for all things are now ready" (Luke 14:17)

FROM here on there is just one theme: The Promised One is come! The Christ is here!

The Gospels are his annunciation—*when* and *how* he came; the Epistles are his fuller enunciation—*why* and for *what* he came.

There are in reality four, or, in fuller statement, seven Gospels, good tidings of great joy each one of them.

1. Matthew, the Gospel of Jesus, the Messiah King.
2. Mark, the Gospel of Jesus, the wonderful.
3. Luke, the Gospel of Jesus, the Son of man.
4. John, the Gospel of Jesus, the Son of God.
5. Acts, the Gospel of Jesus, the risen King.

6. Hebrews, the Gospel of Jesus, our High Priest at the Throne.

7. Revelation, the Gospel of Jesus, our returning Lord.

In the same line, the Epistles may be conceived of as the Gospel of the Life hid with Christ in God, till He come.

It is all Christ Jesus from beginning to end. Jesus on earth; Christ on the Throne; Jesus Christ in you, the hope of Glory! Rejoice!

Here are the four living creatures of Ezekiel (1:10): the lion of the tribe of Judah, in Matthew; the ox of service, in Mark; the man's face, in Luke; the eagle, piercing the blue, in John.

Here is the fulfilment of Isaiah's far-seeing prophecy: the "Wonderful" of Mark, the "counsellor" of Matthew; the "mighty God" of John, the "everlasting Father" of Luke, the "Prince of Peace" in the Epistles and Revelation.

Matthew looks *back*, Mark looks *about*, Luke looks *in*, John looks *up*. The Epistles look *forward* to the ends of the earth, and then to the new heavens and the new earth.

Matthew appeals to the yearning, expectant heart of the Jew; Mark has in mind the busy, active, efficient Roman; Luke sees the cultured, philosophical, humanitarian Greek; John writes for the spiritual believer of all ages. Paul, representing the Epistolary College, speaks to the waiting, working church of the centuries.

Yet each one speaks freely, naturally, independently, and their voice is one—no collision; no collusion. Matthew is himself, John is himself, Paul is himself; but all are Christ's, and each may say with the latter apostle, "to me to live is Christ"—Christ living and doing, speaking, writing through me. It is the testimony of Jesus from first to last; many sided, but single; in the end clear, strong, and full.

Sit down and think back upon these heavenly oracles: let mind and heart recall the whole—see the Christ stand! It is one sweet, composite picture, divinely impressive, of the world's Redeemer. He comes first upon the view, though anticipated by prophecy, as the Babe of Bethlehem, meek and lowly; then the Boy of Nazareth, submissive, obedient; then the Man of Galilee, walking, talking, among his fellows. Presently it is the miracle-worker of Cana, the kindly Benefactor of Sychar and Perea, the Prophet, Priest, and Royal Visitant of Jerusalem; and finally the slain Lamb of Calvary, and the risen Lord of Joseph's garden!

Here ensue Pentecost and the Spirit's advent. And now no longer, as Paul says, do we see Christ in the flesh. It is hence-

forth Christ of the Holy Ghost, who is the Christ of God's right hand, interceding by his blood, sanctifying, by the bread of his throne life, till He comes for his own.

This is the true "Progress of Doctrine"—the rising of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his wings. The story of Christ in his earthly pilgrimage, in the early Gospels, sweet as it is, is but preparatory to the sweeter story of Christ on the Throne, ministering daily to his own, as recorded in the Epistles, and finally lifting them up to himself as promised in Revelation. Full redemption; thank God for such a Saviour!

MARGINAL NOTES

Christ and Israel are the theme of the Old Testament; Christ and the Church, the theme of the New.

In the Old Testament God sees the Prodigal a great way off, but yearns toward him; in the New Testament God comes out to meet him on the way.

"The Old Testament demands holiness; the New Testament gives holiness."—*Clark*.

"The Old Testament says, 'Do this'; the New Testament says, 'It is done.'"—*Clark*.

"The Old Testament begins, 'Where are thou?'; the New Testament begins, 'Where is He?'"—*Jukes*.

CHAPTER 41

MATTHEW

The Gospel of Jesus. The Messiah King

Key-word: "King"

Key-text: "Where is he that is born King of the Jews" (2:2)

OUTLINE

1. Genealogy (chap. 1).
2. His life and teachings (chaps. 2 to 26).
3. His death and resurrection (chaps. 26 to 28).

MATTHEW links us up with the Old Testament. "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple," rang Malachi's far voice. Matthew's calm "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise" (1:18) is but the echo and fulfilment of the gracious promise. The King is here!

Now follow quite naturally, but reassuringly, the Credentials of the King:

Matthew 1. The ancient pedigree of the King, the genealogy.

Matthew 2. The royal retinue of the King, the wise men.

Matthew 3. The baptismal investiture of the King, John the Baptist, the agent thereof.

Matthew 4. The initial proving of the King, the temptations.

Matthew 5. The inaugural message of the King—Sermon on the Mount.

So we might go on. Adopting the prevalent key-note, the sharp, clear message which each book is seen to convey (and this is the basis and clue of our book by book study), each chapter makes its clear and cumulative contribution to this central thought and revelation from the inspired author.

Consequently in chapter 10, Matthew in the development of the unfolding portrait of the Messiah King, promised from of old, gives us the Cabinet of the King, the assembling of the Twelve.))

In Matthew 2, immediately afterward, John the Baptist receives his *nunc dimittis*, and retires from view, in the final

Ratification of the King. "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk" (v. 5). His life work is begun.

The supremacy of the King names chapter 12; and Moses and David and Solomon and Jonah and all the Old Testament worthies bow before Him.

With Matthew 13 we enter the beautiful field of the Parables, a meadow of sweet flowers casting fragrance before the King. All are intended to illustrate His kingdom, which is spoken of twelve times in this one chapter.

And now the King moves in stately tread down the paths of earth, declaring his spirit, kindly feeding the multitude, in chapter 14; casting out evil spirits, in chapter 15; He acts like a King.

In chapter 16 Peter bursts forth in declaration of his Christly Kingship, he cannot refrain; and Christ at once acknowledges it in the Transfiguration, chapter 17.

In chapter 19 Jesus in interpretation of that majesty places a little child in the midst, and humbles the haughty spirit of the rich young man.

And here the shadow of the cross is flung across His pathway, and from chapters 20 to 28 we have the solemn, progressive stages of the crucifixion and resurrection, which were the goal and glory of his life on earth. This is Matthew's story of Israel's King.

MARGINAL NOTES

Weston calls Matthew "the Genesis of the New Testament."

Even Renan speaks of Matthew as the most important book ever written.

Make your own "red letter" text of Matthew by underscoring in red ink Christ's own references to himself.

"Hitch your wagon to a star," but let it be the Star of Bethlehem.

Matthew quotes sixty-five times from the Old Testament.

Matthew speaks of the kingdom, in general, fifty-four times.

"Jesus is the human life of God"—*van Dyke*.

"Christ is not substitute for holiness; but power and source of holiness."—*Gladstone*.

Yet remember we do not grow *into* grace, we grow *in* grace.

You cannot reach heaven by the ten-round ladder of the moral law.

"Come" for Discipleship; "go" for Apostleship.

MARKED TEXTS

"Call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins" (1:21). We might place an equation mark after the word Jesus; the latter part is simply the definition, or expansion, of the name.

"Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" (2:2.) Every true king is a born king.

"Out of Egypt have I called my son" (2:15). Out of Egypt God calls all of his sons. Get you out. Count one.

"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (3:17). Sons never so well please the Father as when they obey him.

Moody said, "This was the last time God spoke to man," *i. e.*, openly from the skies.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness" (6:33). Putting the first thing first.

CHAPTER 42

MARK

Gospel of Jesus, the Wonderful

Key-word: "Power"

Key-text: "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth" (2:10)

OUTLINE

1. Wonderful works (chaps. 1 to 9). From Baptism to Transfiguration.

2. Wonderful teachings (chaps. 10 to 14). From Transfiguration to Conspiracy.

3. Wonderful sacrifice (chaps. 14 to 16). From Conspiracy to Resurrection.

"**H**IS name shall be called Wonderful," said Isaiah long ago, and Mark speaks for this aspect of the Lord's redemptive mission. He does so quite naturally, while altogether providentially. He has been reared in the atmosphere of Roman civilization, Rome the bold and strong and forceful; and he presents a Christ who satisfies his Roman

cast of mind. Moreover, he has been trained under Peter; it was to Mark's house that Peter instinctively turned after his imprisonment (Acts 12:12), and he has the same swift, impulsive manner in speech that Peter has in action. He is the reporter *raconteur* of the Gospels, and his most characteristic word is "Straightway," which, variously rendered, occurs actually ten times in the Greek of the first chapter (vs. 10, 12, etc.).

"Behold," is the beginning word, and *lo and behold* is his attitude of glad amaze from start to finish. His is the newsletter, the "special extra" of the days of the Apostles. Every page has its startling headlines. The Wonderful has come!

And as such it is the most naive and spontaneously natural of all the Gospel narratives. "Have you seen him?" Mark cries with shining eyes. "This is what he said: this is what he did: Bless God, this is what he *is*—the Son of God with power!"

The Roman demanded *authority, efficiency*; and his first chapter declares it. "With authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him" (v. 27).

Credentials is what the world unto which he came required, and Mark is the man who records these signs of his celestial prerogative, "That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise . . . and immediately he arose" (2:10-12). It is signs and miracles from beginning to end. And his miracles prove him. This is He!

Gospel of *works*, in short, we may call it: the works that go with the faith and authenticate it. The "ox" of Ezekiel (1:10), the "righteous servant" of Isaiah (53:11), meek and lowly, but marvelous and mighty—he stands out before us in clear vision as the Christ of God.

MARGINAL NOTES

Mark is called the first Gospel, its date between A. D. 63 and 70.

The four Gospels are like the four streams flowing out of Eden to water the garden. of *Revelation*.

Every chapter of Mark's Gospel may be labeled "Wonderful." Chapter 1, Wonderful Authority; chapter 2, Wonderful Power; chapter 3, Wonderful Healing; chapter 4, Wonderful Teaching, etc.

Twenty miracles are given by Mark in detail. He kept the minutes of Christ's pilgrimage on earth, giving us biography rather than history, the official life of our God.

MARKED TEXTS

"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (1:1). Each Gospel has its characteristic beginning, in accordance with the major thought of the book. Compare Mark's beginning with John's.

"As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face" (1:2). Mark's one direct quotation from the prophets. Matthew quotes on every page.

"Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight" (1:3). That is, *straight to Him*. It does not take Mark long to get to the main theme, Jesus. Compare with Peter's little Gospel of four verses (Acts 10:37-40), and with Paul's even more compact summary in two verses (1 Cor. 15:3, 4).

CHAPTER 43

LUKE

The Gospel of Jesus, the Son of Man

Key-word: "Heal"

Key-text: "He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted" (4:18)

OUTLINE

1. His entrance (chaps. 1 to 4).
2. His sojourn (chaps. 5 to 21).
3. His withdrawal (chaps. 22 to 24).

LUKE is the Gospel for the Greek: the rhetorical, philosophical, beauty-loving Greek. And as such it is wrought out with wondrous taste and symmetry.

Renan, who calls Matthew the most *important* book in the world, because of its initial facts, terms Luke the most *beautiful* book in the world, both because of what it conveys, and the way the author conveys it. And he is right. It is the sweetest story ever told, and no story was ever told more sweetly; its theme is beauty; its telling no less so; it is, in every way, perfect!

It is the man Christ Jesus that is presented here: the friend of sinners. Luke is ever talking of men, and to men. His genealogy goes back to Adam. Therefore it is the universal Gospel. As says Hosea, "I drew them with cords of a man" (11:4). "Behold the man!"

Luke was himself a kind physician, and he knew the symptoms of the world's disease, its wants and yearnings; and he introduces to us here the world's great physician, meeting in full man's most clamorous needs. "He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised" (4:18).

It is the Gospel for the outcast of earth. It is Luke who tells of the Samaritan (10:33, cf. 9:52), and the publican (18:13), and the prodigal (15:11); of Zacchæus (19:2), and the thief on the cross (23:43). He it is who has most to say for womankind (chaps. 1 and 2).

It is the poetic Gospel. The great hymns of the church get their harmonies from the flood of songs from heaven with which the book opens: three angelic benedictions, addressed to Zacharias, Elisabeth, and Mary: a kind of divine oratorio. It opens with a song—"Glory to God"; it closes with a song—"Praising and blessing God." The world has been singing ever since and all the bells sweetly ringing. Thank God for such a Gospel!

MARGINAL NOTES

"Jesus became the Son of man that we might become the sons of God."—*A. J. Gordon.*

Luke, most of all, has the pure Greek style. "The Hellenistic or Macedonian Greek in which the New Testament was written was a remarkably and providentially plastic and forcible tongue."—*Farrar.*

There are 350 verses common to all the Gospels. On the other hand, Matthew has 350 peculiar to himself, Mark 68, Luke 541.—*Reuss.* Luke's biography of the Christ is the freest, fullest, of them all.

"Jesus remains the culminating point, the highest model of religion."—*Strauss.*

"Whatever may be the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed."—*Renan.*

"If any one can believe such miraculous things (as that the Gospel should have accomplished what it did without being of God) he must be possessed of more faith than is necessary

to make him a Christian and remain an infidel from mere credulity."—*Jenyns*.

"The world itself has changed; it has never been the same since Jesus left it."—*Horace Bushnell*.

"It were easier to untwist all the beams of light in the sky, than to get the character of Jesus, which is the real Gospel, out of the world.—*Bushnell*.

"The Word must be truth, for there is here no term between truth and madness."—*Luthardt*.

MARKED TEXTS

"That thou mightest know the *certainty*" (1:4). Let the Chairs that are teaching the "incertitudes" of the Gospel try a course in Luke.

"Walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless" (1:6). Not faultless (see Zacharias' momentary skepticism here), but *blameless*. Thank God, there is a chance for us all.

"A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel" (2:32). "The light that shines farthest shines brightest at home."

"To preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (4:19). Why is the rest of the quotation from Isaiah (61:2), "and the day of vengeance of our God" omitted here? Evidently because this is the day of grace: judgment comes later. "Walk while ye have the light."

CHAPTER 44

JOHN

The Gospel of Jesus, the Son of God

Key-word: "Glory"

Key-text: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,
(and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only
begotten of the Father,) full of grace
and truth" (1:14)

OUTLINE

1. His glory from the beginning (chaps. 1, 2).
2. His glory on earth (chaps. 2-12).
3. His glory beyond (chaps. 13-21).

THIS is the golden Gospel. The glint of the gold of Christ's deity, which is his glory, is all through it.

His garment of flesh was like a loose-knit web about a glowing arc light, the heavenly radiance shining through at every aperture.

The question is often asked, Did Jesus at once know himself as divine? The answer is that quite naturally Jesus grew into a knowledge of himself just as we grow from infancy into our own self-consciousness. This was his condescension. Only we come to know ourselves *as human*. He came to the gradual, growing, but presently full consciousness of himself *as divine*. "I must be about my Father's business" was his solemn self-appraisal and self-devotement from the earliest age of accountability. He was God! He is God! And men to-day, as they look at him, led by the Spirit and the Word—whole-mindedly, whole-heartedly, look at him—are forced to exclaim with Thomas, self-abasingly, but gladly, "My Lord and my God!"

Every chapter reiterates His deity. We can recall the whole book by the flashlight of his glory in each succeeding chapter:

1. Nathanael's confession, "Thou art the Son of God" (v. 49).
2. Miracle of Cana, "Manifested forth his glory" (v. 11).

3. Word to Nicodemus, "Only begotten Son" (v. 16).
4. Woman of Samaria, "I that speak unto thee am he" (v. 26).
5. Impotent man, "The voice of the Son of God" (v. 25).
6. Bread chapter, "The Bread of God is he" (v. 33).
7. Water of life chapter, "Let him come unto me, and drink" (v. 37).
8. Light of the world, "Before Abraham was, I am" (v. 58).
9. Blind man, "It is he that talketh with thee" (v. 37).
10. Shepherd chapter, "I and my Father are one" (v. 30).
11. Martha's declaration, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of God" (v. 27).
12. The Greeks, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men" (v. 32).
13. The supper, "Ye call me Master and Lord . . . so I am" (v. 13 cf., vs. 31, 32).
14. Holy of Holies, "Believe in God, believe also in me" (v. 1).
15. Vine and branches, "Without me ye can do nothing" (v. 5).
16. Holy Ghost chapter, "I will send him unto you" (v. 7).
17. Prayer chapter, "Glorify thy Son" (v. 1).
18. Trial chapter, "Thou sayest that I am a king" (v. 37).
19. Atonement chapter, "It is finished" (v. 30).
20. Resurrection chapter, "My Lord and my God!" (v. 28).
21. Seaside chapter, "Till I come" (v. 22).

Get this word of truth by heart, and be established in the essential deity of our Lord. Be filled, be thrilled, by it. If Paul could say, "Christ and him crucified," no less exultantly and effectively could John say, "*Christ and Him glorified.*" To this end was his gracious witness: "That ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

I believe! Praise God—I *live!*

MARGINAL NOTES

Make Jesus King! Preaching and teaching is only great according as it makes Jesus great. Altering slightly the old Latin, *Magnus non est, cui Jesus Christus non est magnus.* He is not great to whom Jesus is not great, *i. e.*, divine.

"If he is not sensible of their [the Gospels] superior beauty, simplicity, and originality, I will venture to pronounce that he is as deficient in taste as in faith, and that he is as bad a critic as a Christian."—*Jenyns.*

This Gospel opens with Christ in the bosom of the Father, and closes with John in the bosom of Christ."—*A. J. Gordon.*

MARKED TEXTS

"Behold, the Lamb of God" (1:29). John's message and yours. Point, and depart!

"God giveth not the Spirit by measure *unto him*" (3:34). Leave out the limp and lame italics. God gives without measure unto all! Only we limit the blessing by our meager acceptance.

"But be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (16:33). Lady Powerscourt says, "The Christian is not looking up from earth to heaven, but is looking down from heaven to earth." Christ is on the Throne!

CHAPTER 45

ACTS

Book of Witness. Gospel of the Risen Christ

Key-word: "Power"

Key-text: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses" (1:8)

OUTLINE

1. Introductory. The Power (chaps. 1 and 2).
2. Witnessed to in Jerusalem (chaps. 3 to 5).
3. Witnessed to in all Judea (chaps. 6 and 7).
4. Witnessed to in Samaria (chap. 8).
5. Witnessed to unto the uttermost parts of the earth (chap. 9 and onward, including Paul's great missionary journeys).

P RAYER and Power are the two things that stand out in this second message of Luke. On man's part, prayer; on God's part, power. Christ is not dead, Luke says. He is at the right hand of the Father. Make your appeal direct to Him.

The power is not gone: its source and center has simply been removed to the Throne. Reach up by the aid of the

Spirit and get in touch with it—rather with Him. Thus keep the witness bright, till He come.

In fact the Acts of the Apostles might be called the Christian's Book of Common Prayer. It records, as it were, one continuous series of prayer-meetings from start to finish, chapter by chapter.

1. The Prayer-Meeting in the Upper Room.
2. The Pentecostal Prayer-Meeting, when the Spirit came.
3. At the Beautiful Gate "at the Hour of Prayer."
4. A kind of Second Pentecost, when "the place was shaken."
5. "All with one accord in Solomon's Porch."
6. The Deacons chosen with Prayer.
7. Stephen praying for his Persecutors.
8. A Great Prayer-meeting in Samaria (8:15).
9. Saul and Ananias in united prayer (9:11).
10. The Epochal Prayer-meeting in Cornelius' House (10:27).
11. Prayer Conference in Jerusalem over the Gentiles (11:18).
12. The Prayer-meeting at Mark's House when Peter came in upon them (12:12).
13. The Missionary Prayer-meeting that sent Paul forth: who straightway went forth preaching and praying to the end of the book: the last glimpse, like the first, a cottage prayer-meeting.

It is all Prayer!

And consequently it is all Power, revival Power,—one continuous revival from beginning to end. The Acts are, in a sense, the minutes of revival in the early church, following the chapters:

1. Revival power promised.
2. Revival power given.
3. Revival power in operation.
4. Revival power in extension.

And before we reach the end of the book we have the record of nine great revivals: Jerusalem Revival; Samaritan Revival; Cæsarean Revival; Antiochian Revival; Revival in Asia Minor (Paul's evangelistic itinerary); Macedonian Revival; Revival in Athens; Revival in Corinth; and finally in Rome also. It is all revival: God's power in revival. Trust His Grace! But keep up the connections in prayer.

Acts of the Apostles,—nay, Acts of the Holy Ghost; nay, rather, the Acts of the risen Christ. It is Jesus operating by the Spirit and through His church, from the throne of His

power—for the saving of the lost and the gathering of His own. Oh, for the prayer and power of Pentecost! Then shall the church of the risen Christ *resume* the *Acts* of the risen Christ!

MARGINAL NOTES

"The Acts" is *the beginning* of the church.

Pentecost was only a few drops of *the coming* shower.

First John, then Peter, then Paul are the chief actors here. But in the end we have neither Petrine, nor Pauline, nor Johannine doctrine. It is all Christ!

That was a bright little interchange we heard at Northfield. Dr. Gordon was saying, "Empty yourselves, for the Spirit to come in." It was a good word. But so also was that of Dwight L. Moody, swift-spoken at the side, "Let the Spirit in, in order that you *may* be emptied."

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." But, remember, not yours, but the Spirit's liberty. Thus avoid excess.

This is a good book of homiletics. There are ten great sermons in Acts. Peter's four sermons: Pentecost, Beautiful Gate, Jewish Court, House of Cornelius. Paul's four mighty discourses: Antioch, Mar's Hill, Miletus, On the Stair-case at Jerusalem (repeated before Agrippa). And, between these, the Martyr-discourse of Stephen, and the short but effective Expository sermon of Philip on the way to Gaza. Study them for models of preaching.

MARKED TEXTS

"This is that" (2:16). This power is that promise fulfilled; this comfort, that grace bestowed.

"Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (2:21).

"Such as I have give I thee" (3:6). The preacher's, the Christian's, attitude toward those about. What more can we do? What less?

"Beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it" (4:14). More literally and graphically, *they had nothing to say*. The man standing by is the unanswerable argument for Christianity.

"Laid their hands on them, and sent them away" (13:3). Speaking accurately, *turned them loose*. The freedom of the world. Christian Missions.

7 saved sinners - 1) Ethiopian eunuch
2) Saul of Tarsus. 3) Cornelius. 4) Sergius
5) Lydia. 6) Phillipian jailor. 7) Apollo

CHAPTER 46

ROMANS

Epistle of Faith. Christ Our Righteousness

Key-word: "Salvation"

Key-text: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation" (1:16)

The words that follow give us a good working outline:

1. "To every one that believeth."
2. "To the Jew first."
3. "And also to the Greek."

Or, more fully,

- | Doctrine (chaps. 1-8).
- | Dispensation (chaps. 9-11).
- | Duty (chaps. 12-16).

ADOLPH MONOD calls this a "message from Heaven." He caught it one sleepless night when he plunged for his comfort into the matchless eighth of Romans, and then read backward and forward until he grasped the whole. It filled him, thrilled him, lifted him to the skies. So may it do for us all. It is indeed a liberal course in theology to any one who enters into it. And yet how simple—Jesus, Jesus all the way! Jesus to justify: "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (3:24); Jesus to sanctify: "Transformed by the renewing of your mind" (12:2); Jesus to glorify: "To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen" (16:27). This is God's part.

And what is man's? Believe; simply believe: literally and precisely so! Not of works—works are damning; not of race—the race is dead; not of character—a character is rags. There is only one salvation, and that is by acceptance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; for therein is *a righteousness of God* revealed, from faith to faith; *i. e.*, as you stick to the faith path. Wander from it, and you are lost; hold to it, and you are saved.

Here are the sign-boards along the way:

"*The just shall live by faith.*" Start here (1:17).

"The righteousness which is of faith." Keep on here (9:30).

"Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Danger here! (14:23.)

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing." Safety zone! Straight ahead! (15:13.)

Paul is speaking here with the white-hot conviction that is born of experience. On that road to Damascus at one fell blow he had all props of works and race and character knocked from under him. And he got a full glimpse of Jesus on the throne. Henceforth he has but one motive, one message: Faith in the crucified and risen Christ. He will hear nothing else, speak nothing else, live nothing else. Jesus saves! Jesus saves! is his cry—and Jesus only!

Paul writes this epistle from Corinth to Rome. From his elevated pulpit he looks about and sees zealous Jews, proud Greeks, boastful Romans, and a multitude of just ordinary sinners like ourselves. And to one and all he says, "There is no difference, . . . for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (10:12, 13). Just call, but call confessing. This brings salvation.

MARGINAL NOTES

"Romans" is Paul's shout of joy to a lost world. Eureka! I have found the way. It is Jesus!

Paul's Gospel was narrow, you may say, but very high. Like the jubilant circuit-rider, he could say, "I own a very small lot, but I own it all the way up."

"That book knows me," said the Chinaman, as he translated Romans I for the missionary.

The first half of Romans is what God has done for us; the second half, what we may do for Him.

The final glorious exposition of Romans will be given by the Jew. "And so all Israel shall be saved" (11:26). The day approaches.

MARKED TEXTS

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ" (1:1). The photograph of Saul of Tarsus, *after his conversion*.

"So that they are without excuse" (1:20). Bishop Fallows preached from this passage, "The Difficulties of Unbelief."

"The love of God is shed abroad" (5:5). Literally, *floods our souls*. Let it overflow to others.

"I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (7:25). The

way out of the seventh of Romans—and into the eighth. Take Jesus.

“No condemnation” (8:1). And presently “no separation” (v. 39). The condition lies between—*no self*.

“A living sacrifice” (12:1). The gift of a life. Bring it now. So keep the light burning—till He come.

CHAPTER 47

1 CORINTHIANS

Epistle of Gifts. Christ Our Riches

Key-word: “Grace”

Key-text: “So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1:7)

THE thought is expanded in 1:30: “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” This gives us our sufficient outline:

1. The Gift of Wisdom (chaps. 1 to 3).
2. The Gift of Righteousness (chaps. 4 to 9).
3. The Gift of Sanctification (chaps. 10 to 14).
4. The Gift of Redemption (chaps. 15 and 16).

It is all in Christ. Being “enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge” (1:5). And this connects us up with Romans, just before, where Paul says (5:2), “By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand.” Here follow those riches of grace in Christ Jesus, our all and in all. The Epistle holds up this String of Pearls, sent on to us, while we wait, by our heavenly Bridegroom—proof and token that we are His, and that He Himself will follow soon:

“Wisdom.” Including all the rest, but a rich gift in itself. It is something entirely new; the “hidden wisdom of the Spirit, which makes us wise unto salvation.” “We have”—wonderful declaration—“the mind of Christ!” The world does not understand this. It matters not—we do.

"Righteousness." The burden of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, but here enlarged into the life of righteousness. It comes from God, but must be shown in the daily walk. The Corinthians, dwelling in the seat of pleasure, needed admonition here, as do we. Righteousness is from Jesus, and for Jesus. "What would Jesus do?" Christ in you is the secret and the way.

"Sanctification." Growing in grace and the knowledge of Jesus. But the knowledge comes first. This is the instantaneous side of it—conversion. The growth comes later and is gradual, as we abide in Him. He is our sanctification, first and last, full and complete. It is a gift: accept it as such, and work it out.

"Redemption." "To wit, the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23), for which we patiently wait. It is of this Paul is speaking at the close of his wonderful fifteenth of First Corinthians, "Death swallowed up in victory." But, remember, it is Christ's victory. "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." It is all in Him!

2 Cor. 2:14

continue

MARGINAL NOTES

"Here," said Evan Hopkins, at Keswick, "is my hand out of joint and atrophied." The doctor presses his finger on the joint. Click! it is back in place again. That is instantaneous sanctification. But now the blood flows in and the hand takes normal shape again under exercise. This is progressive sanctification—both of God.

Personal religion is according to the gift of Christ: no more, no less. Poor Julian Hawthorne, going over to Catholicism at the last. Why did he do it? "When I want law," he said, "I go to the lawyer. He knows more about it than I do. When I want medicine I go to the physician. That is his specialty. And when I want religion I go to the priest." And what did he get? Here is the Roman Catholic heresy and delusion in a nutshell.

"My heart has always assured me that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is a divine reality."—Webster.

Holiness is wholeness—the whole of Christ in the whole life. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."

MARKED TEXTS

"That ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1:8). And faultless, too, in Him. His blood for my fault; his robe for my blame.

"Not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect" (1:17). Eloquence of speech often nullifying the cross.

"Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth" (2:13). The final voice on plenary inspiration—the very words.

"Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come" (4:5). The sweet, calming influence of the Blessed Hope.

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant" (12:1). What would Paul say of our present ignorance—the all too *common ignorance* of the Holy Ghost!

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received" (15:3). Paul's Gospel in two verses—3 and 4. A wonderful compendium.

"A great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries" (16:9). Two reasons for going to Ephesus. Brave Paul. Go out after him.

CHAPTER 48

2 CORINTHIANS

Epistle of Comfort. Christ Our Sufficiency

Key-word: "Comfort"

Key-text: "Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God" (1:4)

OUTLINE

1. Personal (chaps. 1 to 3).
2. Doctrinal (chaps. 4 to 8).
3. Practical (chaps. 9 to 13).

A COMFORT-BAG, indeed, let down from the skies, for the beleagured Christian. It is full of the surprises of his grace.

The epistle begins with "comfort": "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort" (1:3).

It closes with "comfort": "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort" (13:11).

And in the midst we have the reason for it: "That ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (9:8).

And the source: "My grace is sufficient for thee" (12:9).

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people," cried Isaiah of old (Isa. 40:1). At last, at last, we have it: it is in Jesus!

1. Christ is sufficient for us in personal experience, and we rest in the comfort of His grace. "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen" (1:20). That is, Christ makes true. When we see Him, our hearts instinctively cry out a glad Amen to all the promises. We are *satisfied* with Jesus. Is this *your* personal comfort, Christian, in the deep things of the Word? Jesus fulfils them all. Jesus, my Jesus!

Thus do we grow in grace—His grace and beauty. "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the

Lord, are changed into the same image" (3:18). Know Him, commune with Him, and become like Him.

2. Christ is our comfort and sufficiency in Doctrine.

Thus Paul responds to every impugnement of his apostolic authority and Christian character, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake" (4:5). There are my credentials, says Paul: "The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." I know Him: He knows me. This is sufficient. When He hath "shined in our hearts," then we have the truth, and we need no other vindication of our ministry. The life tells.

3. The practical sufficiency. About ministering, "it is superfluous for me to write to you," says Paul. Why? They had Christ, or rather Christ had them, and all good things followed: "being enriched in everything to all bountifulness" (9:11). A channel of blessing from the Throne.

They asked Captain Levy, of Philadelphia, out Chestnut Street, how he was able to give so much and still have so much left. "Oh," said he, "as I shovel out He shovels in; and the Lord has a bigger shovel than I have."

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all."

MARGINAL NOTES

Some one came to Mr. Hutchinson "on change" in Chicago for a subscription to charity. He wrote his check for a larger amount than was expected. "Oh," cried the young missionary, her face shining, "the Lord loveth a cheerful giver!" "I don't know much about that," said he whom they lightly called "Old Hutch," "but I am sure He loves a cheerful beggar." Ask great things for the great Christ.

They said to a humble Christian sister, rich toward God: "Are you the woman with the great faith?" "Oh, no," said she; "I am the woman with a little faith in the great God."

"Charcoal is carbon in humiliation: the diamond is carbon in glory."—A. J. Gordon.

MARKED TEXTS

"Our sufficiency is of God" (3:5). Here is where Spurgeon laughed aloud—to think that our little cups could exhaust the ocean of His grace!

"For the love of Christ constraineth us" (5:14). Sweeps us along. Get into the current.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin;

that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (5:21). What a transaction! I bring Him what I have—my sin: He brings me what He has—His righteousness. And the exchange is made. He takes my sin, and gives me His righteousness. This is grace, and it is wonderful.

They "first gave their own selves to the Lord" (8:5). That settles it always. This is the text with which B. Fay Mills waked us up in those good days of old.

CHAPTER 49

GALATIANS

Epistle of Freedom. Christ Our Liberty

Key-word: "Free"

Key-text: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free" (5:1)

OUTLINE

1. Liberty of prophecy (chap. 1).
2. Liberty of grace (chap. 2).
3. Liberty of the Spirit (chap. 3).
4. Liberty of adoption (chap. 4).
5. Liberty of service (chap. 5).
6. Liberty of life (chap. 6).

IT IS the Christian's Declaration of Independence. Here we sing our battle-hymn—*Christus Liberator!* "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). Assert it; assume it; assure it.

In the epistles that go before we *find our standing*; in Galatians we *take our stand*; in Romans, Paul bids us use our *heads* to grasp the principles of our religion; in First Corinthians, to put out the *hand* to grasp our privileges in Christ; in Second Corinthians, to lift the *heart* to apprehend the comforts that are ours; here in Galatians the apostle summons us to stand upon our *feet* in the liberty that Christ imparts.

And it is a great liberty. Rise into it; exult in it. Like

Israel at the Red Sea, dismiss with songs of rejoicing the thongs and shackles of the world; leave there, too, with the broken chariot wheels, the fetters of sin; and let the whelming waters of the Red Sea and Jordan together strike away forever the heavy burden of the law, the galling bondage of the flesh, the haunting fear of man. Break forth from self and sin and Satan. In Christ I am free! free! free!

Here is the Christian's Delsarte School of Expression, where we shake our stiffened muscles and minds out of bound and burdensome rigidity into calm, free exercise, where we can act, and speak, and think naturally, normally, and effectively. Or rather, it is Christ in us, speaking his mind, doing his work, in the glad, free, yet submissive instrumentality of the sanctified soul. This is the truest liberty, the only liberty worth having.

And so get hold of Galatians, and let Galatians get hold of you. Be free in Christ!

Chapter 1. Free to preach Gospel. "Paul, an apostle (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead)" (v. 1). Hands off! I am free by God's appointment!

Chapter 2. Free to experience his grace. "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me . . . I do not frustrate the grace of God" (vs. 20-21). Paul gives grace free play; he gives God access: God gives him success.

Chapter 3. Free to receive the gifts of the Spirit. "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (v. 14). Believe, receive, declare.

Chapter 4. Free to enjoy Sonship with God. "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (v. 7). Ours is the full liberty of the house.

Chapter 5. Free to bear fruit unto God. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace" (v. 22). The exuberant spontaneity of the branch in the vine—are we showing it?

Chapter 6. Free to feel and know the boundless, surging life that is in Christ. "In Christ Jesus—a new creature" (v. 15)—*i. e.*, a new creation: new life in Christ. No wonder Paul cries out: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (v. 14). Let the world go: I

have Christ, and, having Him, have all things. Oh, the joy of it: the free, full life that is ours in Christ Jesus!

MARGINAL NOTES

“‘In Christ’ is like the Rosetta stone: it unlocks all the mysteries of grace.”—*Gordon*.

In Galatians we are not working *for a living*, as servants, but *in our living*, as sons.

Read here Paul’s Seminary Course: Damascus, Arabia, Jerusalem, Syria—the World! (1:15–24.)

This is what David means when he says, Psalm 51:12 (corrected reading), “Uphold me—a free spirit.” And it is what Paul intimates in Ephesians 6:15: “Your feet shod with the preparation [swift readiness] of the gospel of peace.” Free to know: free to do—this is living!

MARKED TEXTS

“Who gave himself for our sins, that he might *deliver us* from this present evil world” (1:4). A blessed “jail delivery.”

“If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ” (1:10). Which is it, preacher—Christ, or man?

“And they glorified God in me” (1:24). “Let your light *so shine*.”

“I am [have been] crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live” (2:20). The adversative “nevertheless” is not in the Greek. Rather “and so I live.” Because Christ lives, I live—“yet not I, but Christ.”

“Shut up unto the faith” (3:23). This way out, O Christian! The only way.

“Be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (5:1). Samson bound. Break loose! “Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion” (Isa. 52:2).

CHAPTER 50

EPHESIANS

Epistle of Fulness. Christ Our All-in-all

Key-word: "Fulness"

Key-text: "And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God" (3:19)

OUTLINE

1. Ante-room (chap. 1).
2. Audience room (chap. 2).
3. Throne room (chap. 3).
4. Jewel room (chap. 4).
5. Armor room (chap. 5).

IN THIS epistle we enter the Holy of Holies in Paul's writings. The Apostle speaks in Second Corinthians 12:2 of being "caught up to the third heaven." Well, here, as it were, he gives his report. "Blessed," he cries out at the start (1:3), "be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Paul is carried away as he tells of it. It is the high-water mark of apostolic revelation.

Find here, if you will, Paul's Temple of Ephesus, which the Christian may enter, but with hushed voice and bared head. It is "an holy temple in the Lord" (2:21).

We approach in these chapters, one by one, six splendid rooms. They are all "in Christ."

1. The spacious Ante-room, where we read upon the wall our standing with God through Christ. "Chosen in him before the foundation of the world." "Holy and without blame before him in love." "Predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ." "Accepted in the beloved." Here are some great wall mottoes for Christians. It will tax all our spiritual energies to live up to them. Tremblingly we take our shoes from off our feet.

2. The glorious Audience chamber of the King. Here we are conducted into the Presence. Here we have "access by one

Spirit unto the Father" (v. 18). At the door of entrance the gracious word sounds out: "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." And the second note is like unto it: "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (v. 6). And best of all, the voice sounding sweetly through the corridors, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (v. 19). Humbly but thankfully we bend in glad acceptance.

3. The gorgeous Throne Room where we gather to worship and to praise. Here we behold the King. Here with Paul we bow our knees "unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named" (vs. 14 and 15). And here we cry exultantly, but worshipfully, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think . . . unto him be glory" (vs. 20, 21). Lift your Hosannas.

4. The flashing Jewel Room. Here, as in Bunyan's Interpreter's House, we get our epaulets and our equipment. Here are the garments of holiness, "all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering." Here are our historic banners and escutcheons, "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." Here, bright with gems, are the graces bestowed, as we will take them. "But unto every one of us is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ." Arise and shine!

5. The sounding Choir Room, or Oratory. "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (v. 19). Sing, Christian, sing!

6. The noble Armory. "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (v. 13). Get ready, brother, for the fight. Attention! Shoulder arms!

These are among the great chapters of the Book:

1. Boundless chapter, "Before the Foundation."
2. Limitless chapter, "Ages to come."
3. Measureless chapter, "Above all we ask or think."
4. Fathomless chapter, "Fill all things."
5. Faultless chapter, "Spot or wrinkle."
6. Dauntless chapter, "Able to stand."

MARGINAL NOTES

Read Ephesians and get a glimpse of the light about the Throne.

Meet Jesus in this book. "Better five minutes where Christ is than a year in the places where Jesus once was."

MARKED TEXTS

"Faithful in Christ Jesus" (1:1). The key is hanging at the door.

"Sealed with that holy Spirit of promise" (1:13). Have you the seal? Show it, brother.

"The working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead" (1:19, 20). The resurrection, the Christian's standard of power.

"Gave him to be the head over all to the church" (1:22). If we lose the Head, we lose all: we are nothing.

"The measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (4:13). The Christian's standard of measurement.

"Put on the whole armour of God" (6:11). The panoply of God! Put on God, *as an armour*: thus only can we overcome the world. It is by the "power of *His* might."

CHAPTER 51

PHILIPPIANS

Epistle of Joy. Christ Our Rejoicing

Key-word: "Rejoice"

Key-text: "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord (3:1)"

OUTLINE

1. Joy of faith (chap. 1).
2. Joy of love (chap. 2).
3. Joy of communion (chap. 3).
4. Joy of hope (chap. 4).

PAUL is hail-fellow-well-met here; here he laughs out loud; here he dances, like David, in sheer joy before the Ark—the rejoicing apostle.

Noble church at Philippi! Who would not have been proud to be a member of it? The only church in all that varied, burdensome itinerary that made the wearied, sometimes worried, apostle happy—genuinely happy. "I thank my God

upon every remembrance of you" he says (1:3). That was a great thing to say. Of how many churches, as you look back, my brother, could you rightly affirm it? This one made Paul glad.

And there was good ground for it. The apostle seems to be sitting under a great, wide-spreading apple-tree, full of the fragrant white blossoms of love: "That your love may abound" (1:9). And presently under the rich, golden fruitage of righteousness, "Being filled with the fruits of righteousness" (1:11). How could such a man as Paul help rejoicing?

1. *Joy of Faith.* "Having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and *joy of faith*" (v. 25). And what is the faith? "Christ is preached," says Paul (v. 18), "and I therein do rejoice." This is the "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, of the happy, efficient church."

2. *The joy of Christian love.* "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind" (v. 2). And this mind is the mind of Christ (v. 5), which is self-forgetting love. This was the church that took the "Master of Arts" degree—"Sons of God without rebuke"—the art of living, as Christians, "blameless and harmless," toward one another.

3. *The joy of spiritual communion:* with Christ, our Lord. "Rejoice," says Paul (v. 3) "in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." For this he counts all but loss—"that I may win Christ" (v. 8) in closest fellowship. "For our conversation [personal intimacy] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 20). It is in this same epistle that Paul declares, *photographically*, "for me to live is Christ" (1:21).

4. *The joy of an assured hope.* "Rejoice in the Lord, always, and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand" (vs. 4, 5). And this blessed hope casts its gracious influence forward over all the life. As Moody said, commenting on verse 6, "Be careful for nothing: be prayerful for everything; be thankful for anything."

MARGINAL NOTES

Henry Ward Beecher: one can see him yet, standing before his people there at Plymouth Church, where he was ever at his best—Bible in hand. "Finally, my brethren," he reads, "rejoice in the Lord." Then a pause. "Paul is trying to

think of some better last word to speak," he says, *sotto voce*, "but he can't find it. And presently he cries out, 'And again, I say—Well—just rejoice!'—that is enough."

Dr. H. G. Weston expounded Philippians as the Ideal Life: 1, Character; 2, Model; 3, Method; 4, Results.

Be glad: "The joy of the Lord is your strength." The note of joy occurs in this epistle, Dr. Brookes reminds us, nearly a score of times.

Quoth the colored man at Colonel Clark's Mission in Chicago: "Bredren, when I gets to de gates ob heben, if dey shuts me out, I'll say, *Anyhow I had a good time getting here!*"

MARKED TEXTS

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform [complete] it until the day of Jesus Christ" (1:6). Compare with Ruth 3:18: "Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall; for the man [Boaz, Ruth's destined spouse] will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day."

"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow" (2:10). Some time, some time, every knee, glad or reluctant, shall bend, and every voice will cry out, "Christ is Lord!" Only be sure you are on the *right-hand side*.

"And that every tongue should confess" (2:11), "Galilean, thou hast conquered!" The death cry of Julian the apostate will be the world's final confession—with many, alas, too late, too late.

"I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" (4:11). More correctly, "*therein* to be content." Paul while always calmly patient, was always "reaching forth" (3:13) with a holy discontent to better things before. "The prize, the prize—secure!"

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (4:13). Rather, "*in Christ*," for then it is Christ—not I—who does it.

"My God shall supply all your need" (4:19). Armchair promise: Lean back and rest.

"How much is God troubled about that burdensome debt of yours?" said John McNeil. Do the best you can and *rest!*

CHAPTER 52

COLOSSIANS

Epistle of Completeness. Christ Our Life

Key-word: "Life"

Key-text: "Your life is hid with Christ in God" (3:3)

OUTLINE

1. The Deeper Life (chap. 1).
2. The Higher Life (chap. 2).
3. The Inner Life (chap. 3).
4. The Outer Life (chap. 4).

THE Deeper Life starts with eternity: it is that which takes hold of Him who was "in the beginning with God." The Higher Life is the life Jesus is living for us at the right hand of the Throne! In fact, all the life we have as Christians is the Life "hid with Christ in God." But it is Life, real and sufficient—eternal Life—we are "complete in him" (2:10).

read!
it [Here is the glorious "progress of doctrine" in Paul's epistles: Romans, justified in Christ; 1 Corinthians, enriched in Christ; 2 Corinthians, comforted in Christ; Galatians, free in Christ; Ephesians, quickened in Christ; Philippians, happy in Christ; Colossians, complete in Christ—and if we go on to Thessalonians, enthroned in Christ!]

Naturally this becomes the epistle of culmination and completeness. We are builded and buttressed in Christ—complete!

1. *Building downward*, rooted in Jesus; striking down deep into His ineffable personality and doctrine; "grounded and settled" in him (v. 23). This is the *deeper* life.

2. *Building upward*. "Built up in him, and stablished in the faith" (v. 7), rearing a stately structure to his praise and wholly by his grace: the *higher* life.

3. *Building inward*: dead to the world; hid with Christ, we discover, one by one, the virtues of the Lord Jesus. "Mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering" (v.

12). "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" (v. 16)—the *inner* life.

4. *Building outward*: making the new life to be seen and felt among men. "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time" (v. 5); the *outer* life. Thus do we manifest Jesus to the world. For the life of Christ was not written by Edersheim or Farrar. Nor was it given and ended in the Gospels. It is the Life He is living at the throne, told to-day in living epistles, known and read of all men. Till He come, live the Life; make Jesus known!

MARGINAL NOTES

Over the page here is written in this my own Study Bible: "Read at Northfield"; and it was made in those treasured days very precious and personal. Opposite "Epaphras" is the letter "*M*"—it stood for Moody, who was then everywhere in evidence, helping, directing: how we miss him!—"our dear fellow-servant in Christ." Over against "Tychicus" a "*G*"—that was for Gordon, "a beloved brother" indeed, who fed our souls daily out of the deep things of the Spirit. And for Onesimus a "*P*," which stood with us for Pierson, a "faithful and beloved brother," who was making the Bible a new book to us. A triumvirate of masters these—all gone on. God be praised, we follow after.

And then another note *on the way home from Northfield*. Dare I speak of it here. Yes, if one tells the whole truth about these worn Bible margins. Here on the hillside, shut away from man, the battle was fought through. Christ or self—which? The issue comes sooner or later to every Christian worker. Thank God, it was fought and finished, settled on the spot. Written clear and plain across the Bible page it stands and shall stand: "Midnight, August 11, 1890. Lord, if Thou wilt, I will! God help me!! Henceforth *for me to live is Christ*; naught for self; all for Thee! Amen!"

MARKED TEXTS

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him" (2:6). Saved by faith: keep saved by faith. Come believing—go on believing!

Through the faith of the operation of God" (2:12). It is operating all the time, God's work in us. Have faith, and have patience—and be glad.

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (3:4.) They do not under-

stand us now. Poor souls, how can they? They don't know Him in whom and by whom we live. After a while they will see Him in the glory—and ourselves with Him. *Then* they will understand!

CHAPTER 53

1 THESSALONIANS

Epistle of Brotherhood. Christ Our Elder Brother on High

Key-word: "Brethren"

Key-text: "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God"
(1:4)

OUTLINE

1. "In much assurance" (chap. 1).
2. In "the Gospel of God" (chap. 2).
3. In "Afflictions" (chap. 3).
4. In Holiness (chap. 4).
5. In Hope (chap. 5).

THIS is the Intimate Epistle, the letter which is a "Heart Talk." Paul shuts the door here and gets very close up to those whom he calls his "brethren." The word occurs fourteen times.

1. Brethren, we are, in the sweet assurance of God's sovereign choice. "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance" (v. 5). We felt it to be straight from God, and our hearts overflowed.

2. Brethren, in the solid conviction of a Gospel which is divine. "Ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God" (v. 13). Our feet are planted on the rock; therefore we stand.

3. Brethren, in the warm sympathy which comes with the endurance of afflictions, common to all and sent of God to all, "For yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto" (v. 3). Therefore be of good comfort, and be knit together in love.

4. Brethren, in the holy life and walk that Christ set before us, "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness" (v. 7). Hence we strive together "to please God." There is sweet joy in this.

5. Brethren, in the hope of our Lord's return. "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (v. 2). Therefore "let us watch and be sober," that ye may "be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Look up and be glad.

This last note is evidently the major note of the epistle. It is this and this alone which makes us sing in unison; it is this which makes us really and truly "brethren." Each chapter closes with it: "to wait for his Son from heaven" (1:10). "In the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming" (2:19). "At the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints" (3:13). "Caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air" (4:17). And here in the last chapter, "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (5:23). In view of all this, why raise the question, "Will Christ come again?" He said he would—that is sufficient.

Let us be reasonable. There is nothing doubtful or divisive about the Blessed Hope. No one can read the Word without seeing it. No one can listen to the Spirit without hearing it. No one can live with Jesus without feeling it. Why quarrel with one another about so sweet a message as our Lord's "I will come again"? The only dispute in the premises is with our Lord himself; and among "brethren," and toward our Elder Brother in the skies, that is impossible. Be watchful; be Christians—Christ's men.

MARGINAL NOTES

Christ's first coming was a sudden, startling surprise to the philosophy of the times. His second coming, it is prophesied, will be no less so.

No one can keep the sun from shining, but he can prevent it from shining on himself.

The "body" is the Outer Court. The "soul" is the Holy Place. The spirit is the Holy of Holies. Quoting from Moody's Bible—"In unregenerate man the Holy of Holies is dark and untenanted. Man becomes sanctified when the Holy Ghost fills the spirit, and, working through the soul, holds the body in obedience.

MARKED TEXTS

"Making mention of you in our prayers" (1:2). The best proof of sympathy and love.

"In much assurance" (1:5). In *gushing fulness*; like a pent up fountain.

"*Sounded out the Word*" (1:8). Climax. Followers. Ensamples, Witnesses!

"What manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven" (1:9, 10). "Turned," "to serve," "to wait." Three results of a successful pastorate.

"For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" (2:19.) Why then ask, shall we *know* each other there?"

"And the dead in Christ shall rise first" (4:16). The dear ones gone before in Christ. We shall find them there with our Lord to welcome us.

"Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks. Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil" (5:16-22). The perfect octave. Run the whole gamut; strike every note.

CHAPTER 54

2 THESSALONIANS

Epistle of Glory. Christ Our Returning Lord

Key-word: "Glory"

Key-text: "To the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2:14)

OUTLINE

1. What it is (chap. 1).
2. How it comes (chap. 2).
3. How to wait for it (chap. 3).

THIS is a second epistle on the Blessed Hope. These Thessalonian Christians were a forward-looking people, and Paul addresses them, as he addresses us, on what is presumably uppermost in mind and thought. The first epistle says, "He is surely coming again." The second epistle says, "But work and wait, till He come." It is an exhortation to patience, "the patient waiting for Christ" (3:5), but a patience that ministers joy and assurance on the way.

The church at Thessalonica was carried away with the expectation of Christ's triumphant return,—who that contemplates it can but feel the mighty thrill of it? But we must keep our feet on the ground: wings, not yet. Mingle calm judgment with ardent hope. Work while you wait; keep hand to the plow.

It is like our Lord's word to the disciples in Acts 1. "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the Kingdom?" they eagerly inquired. "Leave that with the Father," he said, in effect. "Do your day's work, and wait. But the Kingdom is coming, that is clear, and the glory with it. Therefore keep watching; and work while you wait."

Chapter 1. What is this event? Something sudden and startling. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed [apocalypsed] from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire taking vengeance!" No mild theophany here. This for "them that know not God." And for His own: "The presence of the Lord, the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified

in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe!) Wonderful day! it is coming.

Chapter 2. The manner of its coming,—the time, the place. Herein be not anxious, God will take care of his own program of the ages. But know this, that “the man of sin” must first be revealed, and “the mystery of iniquity” work itself out. The Black Hand of the ages—it thrusts itself more and more upon our vision from day to day.

Chapter 3. And while we wait, three things: Be patient (v. 5); “be not weary in well doing” (v. 13); know the peace of God (v. 16). Enough, till He come!

MARGINAL NOTES

There were two wrong tendencies to be corrected by this epistle: an inclination to be restless and troubled because of long waiting; an inclination, on the other hand, to be dormant and idle as having nothing more to expect. Paul meets them both.

Two mysterious and mighty Personalities stand out here as over against each other in the world that now is. “He that opposeth,” and “He that withholdeth”; the spirit of evil versus the spirit of good. The latter, which is the Holy Ghost, keeps sin and Satan in check. When He at last is withdrawn (possibly with the translation of the saints), then comes the final world blasphemy, and the final and fatal collapse, at the breath of His power.

The hope of His coming stimulates without exciting, sobers without depressing. It is the balancing doctrine. “Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.”

“Holiness is glory in the bud: glory is holiness manifested.”

MARKED TEXTS

“A manifest token of the righteous judgment of God” (1:5). How are our “persecutions and tribulations” such? Psalm 94:13 gives us the clue. “That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked.” Chastisement is for the righteous—judgment for the sinner.

“That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled” (2:2); explained by 1:7 above—“And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed.” Anticipate that *rest*. “Study to be quiet.”

“God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie” (2:11). The curse of partial faith, *e. g.*, Christian science, theosophy.

"And the Lord direct your hearts into the *love* of God, and into the *patient waiting* for Christ" (3:5). A shelter with two rooms. Here lodge till the Day breaks.

CHAPTER 55

1 TIMOTHY

Epistle of Sound Doctrine. Christ Our Teacher

Key-word: "Gospel"

Key-text: "According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust" (1:11)

OUTLINE

1. In the Church (chaps. 1 to 3).
2. In Society (chaps. 4 to 5).
3. In the Home (chap. 6).

HERE are three successive pastoral epistles. Each with its special message from Paul:

- 1 Timothy. Guard the Gospel.
- 2 Timothy. Guard the Witness.
- Titus. Guard the Life. And if we add—
- Philemon. Guard the Stewardship.

We need these appeals to-day.

In 2 Thessalonians 3:6, just before, Paul has been exhorting every brother to walk "after the tradition which he received from us." We may as well confess it, we are traditionalists, every one of us,—if only the tradition, which is the simple line of truth, lead us straight back to Christ, whose mouthpiece is the inspired apostle. This gives us certitude and authority, and is the only valid basis for Christian consciousness or Christian testimony.

Even in that early day Paul was called upon to warn his younger brother Timothy against false doctrine:

Chapter 1. Against the heresy of Judaism and formality. "Desiring to be teachers of the law" (v. 7). Over against all legalism and works of righteousness and "fables and endless genealogies," Paul puts "the glorious gospel of the blessed God"

(v. 11). Preach the new *gospel of the glory*. There is inspiration and power in it.

Chapter 2. Against anarchism and impiety. Prayer and respect "for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (v. 2). Be a good citizen.

Chapter 3. Against antinomianism and general lawlessness, "Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience" (v. 9). The right use of liberty.

Chapter 4. Against demonism and spiritualism. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" (v. 1). "Try the spirits," said John.

Chapter 5. Against ecclesiastical despotism and arrogance. "Without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality" (v. 21). We be brethren, and equals. No hierarchy; no popery.

Chapter 6. Against hypocrisy and cupidity. "Men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain [a way of gain] is godliness: from such withdraw thyself" (v. 5). As a corrective of all this, Paul points to "the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness" (6:3). Guard the Gospel!

MARGINAL NOTES

There were two related heresies then as now; Gnosticism—I *know it all*, and Agnosticism—I *know nothing*. The one is the parent of proud rationalism, the other of weak latitudinarianism. Bring each to the light of "the glorious gospel of the blessed God."

"Testimony," says Bacon, "is like the arrow from the bow, dependent upon the hand that draws the string. Argument is like the arrow from the cross-bow, strong though a child could shoot it."

"His teaching was not the exposition—it was the text."—*Van Dyke*.

Fact; Faith; Feeling—the order of Christian assurance.

MARKED TEXTS

"Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope" (1:1), *i. e.*, His coming kingdom and lordship. As Christ we believe in Him; as Jesus we love Him; as Lord we hope in Him. Faith, Hope, Love,—these three!

"According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God"

(1:11). Paul's standard of measurement. If weak here, on the Gospel of the glory, we are weak everywhere. It is the test of Christian doctrine and life.

"This is a faithful saying" (1:15). See Paul's three "Faithful sayings": 1:15, 4:9, Titus 3:8. Salvation, sanctification, glorification.

"How thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God" (3:15). Church manners. A "lost art" in some localities.

"But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness" (6:11). The faithful minister's six-in-hand.

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life" (6:12). Does this mean, as some assume, fight till you lay hold of life eternal? By no means. Rather, fight *by laying hold*. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

CHAPTER 56

2 TIMOTHY

Epistle of Straight Living. Christ Our Example

Key-word: "Endure" (Carry on)

Key-text: "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2:3)

OUTLINE

1. In the Camp (chap. 1).
2. In the Field (chap. 2).
3. In the Fight (chap. 3).
4. To the Death (chap. 4).

IN 1 TIMOTHY, a straight Gospel; 2 Timothy, a straight life. In the one Paul says, Guard the doctrine, which is our message from God. Here in 2 Timothy he says, Guard the testimony, which is our life from God. Where one is the gun, the other is "the man behind the gun": they go together. "Trust in the Lord and keep your powder dry." Ours is a real battle with sin.

If 1 Timothy says Shoulder Arms! metal polished, ammunition ready! this says, Attention! Forward march! face front, shoulders square, keeping step with our Leader, who is Christ!

The walk is as necessary as the weapon. Was it not one of the Wilberforce family who said, "After a while father gave up preparing his discourses, and as we felt simply prepared *himself*?"

Guard, therefore, most diligently, the witness. 1. In the home, which is the camp life of the Christian. Mother's gracious influence comes in here, the sweet lasting ministries of a Lois or a Eunice. The early devotion and training of a consecrated hearth.

2. Away from home, in the school, the office, the marketplace, which is the field of service and discipline. Here we are to *endure*, as good soldiers, standing the test as one who "needeth not to be ashamed," "in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves."

3. When the sharp battle is on, and the faith is assailed, standing stanch and strong, smiting effectively with the life, which is lived "godly in Christ Jesus," and wielding the Word, wherewith we are "thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

4. And finally, when we reach the end of this life, which for us is the beginning of glory, looking up, glad and "ready to be offered," having "fought a good fight," having "finished" the course, having "kept the faith," waiting only for the "crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give,"—and as Paul adds, "Not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

This is a great life of witnessing. The main question is, *Do you love His appearing?*

MARGINAL NOTES

"What is your persuasion?" Swift and strong the answer, "The same as Paul's: 'I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.'" (1:12).

Make it very personal. Not, "I know in whom"—how often you hear it thus weakly quoted—but "I know *whom* I have believed" (1:12). "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine."

"Second Timothy two fifteen!" Charles Alexander's salutation text. Have you heard him tell the story? He and Oliver chose it first as students there at Chicago. It was the word of Scripture with which they ever greeted each other out in the

work in those early days. By letter, by telegram, on the street, in the throng, saying good-bye, saying good morning. Just a wave of the hand and—"2 Timothy 2:15!" It cheered the soul of the toiler, it sent many a chance hearer to his Bible to look it up. The note caught and spread. There as the evangelist was leaving these shores and the boat was turning its nose toward the brine, the little sister beside us at the wharf, dearly beloved, gone home to glory now, with her clear, sweet voice threw it over the heads of the crowd and above the din of wheels and whistles, "2 Timothy 2:15"! And Alexander heard it; we saw him turn and salute. And far yonder as the ship neared the landing place in the South Seas, a man on shore with his hands to his mouth. They listened. Over the harbor waters it came, brightening, stimulating, "2 Timothy 2:15"! May you hear it again, brother, when you have sighted the Golden Gate.

MARKED TEXTS

"That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us" (1:14). One of F. B. Meyer's favorite platform texts. Two committings; two keepings: verse 12, "That which I have committed unto him"; verse 14, "That good thing which was committed unto thee." As we keep his treasure in grace, He keeps our treasure in glory.

"Rightly dividing the word of truth" (2:15). Discern the dispensation: be careful of the application.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (3:16). A more faulty and misleading translation than the Revision here ("All Scripture that is inspired") could scarcely be conceived. We are far nearer to the original as the verse is rendered in the King James Version, and also nearer, as we conceive it, to the mind of the Spirit.

"Having itching ears" (4:3). Prominent enough, in these Athenian days. When our English brethren unconsciously add the *h* they make no mistake here. Hitching ears!

CHAPTER 57

TITUS

Household Epistle. Christ Our Heavenly Guest

Key-word: "Adorn"

Key-text: "That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things" (2:10)

OUTLINE

1. The Home and the Church (chap. 1).
2. The Home and the Community (chap. 2).
3. The Home and the State (chap. 3).

IT IS the home life that counts in the Foreign Field, in Home Missions, in cities and villages, and country places over all the land. The Christian household is the main evangelizing and civilizing agency everywhere.

Bishops and pastors are here enjoined to set a good example before their people and lead them in adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour.

In First and Second Timothy Paul is speaking especially to the traveling preacher or evangelist. Here he addresses himself to Titus, the type of the settled pastor in the midst of his flock. "Keep the home fires burning"; guard the "Light in the Window."

1. *The local Church.* "For this cause," says Paul, "left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting [overlooked], and ordain elders [pastors] in every city" (v. 5). Establish a center and get the work started. One or two families are enough. And remember, practically all the religion you have is what you have at home and in the family circle.

2. *The Community.* "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works" (v. 7). The type of Christian living, "Like priest, like people." In every pastoral settlement, in fact, the people either go with their minister, or he goes with his people, or—he leaves; *i. e.*, if he has anything like a decent respect for himself and his calling.

3. *The State.* "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work" (v. 1). And nothing so thoroughly puts the people in the proper mind as the pastor's own loyal conduct as a Christian and a citizen.

MARGINAL NOTES

This is the Epistle of Great Doctrinal Statements. Here, for example, in 2:11-13, is the Christian's Testimony in this world. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared [the Gospels]; teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present word [the Epistles]; looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ [Revelation]."

We have also, in 3:4-7, God's Plan of Salvation, in epitome: "But after the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared [Atonement], not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost [Justification]; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour [Sanctification]; that being justified by his grace we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life [Glorification]."

There are, in short, Two Appearings and Two Adornings: "The grace of God that bringeth salvation [correctly rendered] to all men, hath appeared,"—the appearing of Grace. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing,"—the appearing of Glory. "That they may adorn the doctrine,"—our adorning. "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us,"—His adorning.

MARKED TEXTS

A message to preachers (see Weymouth translation): "A man of blameless life, true to his one wife, having children who are themselves believers, and who are free from every reproach of profligacy or of stubborn self will" (1:6).

A poster for father in his office: "Be temperate, grave, sober-minded, robust in faith, in love, in patience" (2:2).

A wall-motto for mother's room: "Be in conduct as becometh consecrated persons" (2:3).

CHAPTER 58

PHILEMON

Epistle of Love. Jesus Our Lord and Master

Key-word: "Love"

Key-text: "Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee" (v. 9)

OUTLINE

1. Repenting Love (vs. 1-11).
2. Reconciling Love (vs. 12-18).
3. Recompensing Love (vs. 19-25).

THIS might be called Layman's Epistle, or Stewardship Epistle. It tells of the relations of master and servant in the business affairs of life, and it applies the religion of Jesus for the sanctifying and strengthening of these relationships. It shows us how Christianity makes for peace everywhere, both here and hereafter, and belongs to the market-place as well as to the church. Philemon is, in fact, a textbook of social service, and we have here a practical instance of "applied Christianity." It brings in three characters:

1. Onesimus, the runaway slave, or Christ's love showing itself in repentance and return. "I beseech thee for my son Onesimus" (v. 10). The servant, convicted, comes back penitently to his master and seeks to make amends for the past. The best friend of normal industry and social intercourse is religion in the soul. It is the hope of civilization.

2. Philemon, the Christian master, or how Christ prepares the way for reconciliation and restoration. Onesimus has returned a Christian. Receive him, says the apostle, "not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved" (v. 16). You can trust the religion of Jesus to make things right. Differences born of hate and pride disappear: love unites us. "One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren" (Matt. 23:8). "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love." Here love works to restore and to repay (v. 19).

3. Paul, the Christian intercessor. "Blessed are the peacemakers." The apostle follows Christ in his priestly office here. (1) Identifying himself with the malefactor, "If thou count

me therefore a partner, receive him as myself" (v. 17). Thus also Moses with poor, petulant Israel. Thus often must the Shepherd suffer with the sheep. Hear Stephen: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:60); and that other Voice at the Cross: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). (2) Assuming vicariously their burden and advocating in his own self their cause. "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account" (v. 18). Paul's account of grace was most heavily drawn upon by those early Christians—but how much greater His burden who "laid down his life for the sheep"! This is the Christian principle of self-forgetting love that puts salt into the lump of society and sweetens all life, till He come.

MARGINAL NOTES

"The best friend to have is Jesus."

Exalt the Christ. Your life is great according as it makes Jesus great.

"We have better historic proof," said H. L. Hastings, "of Moses, Jesus, Paul, Peter, John, than we have of Alexander, Cæsar, Socrates, or Plato." But the best proof is in the life of love.

The consecrated life has a dual aspect, and a twofold experience. The twofold aspect is of Christ's death on the cross, and of Christ's life at the throne: the twofold experience is, correspondingly, the crucifixion of the flesh, and the exaltation of the spirit. "Put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pet. 3:18).

The Mass is either Christ's sacrifice offered by anticipation, as if we were back in Old Testament days, hence an anachronism; or it is Christ's sacrifice reoffered in New Testament days, since the "finished work," hence a sacrilege and a blasphemy. Jesus only!

MARKED TEXTS

"The church in thy house" (v. 2). Primitive piety.

"I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers" (v. 4). Does your name at the hour of prayer make some one somewhere glad?

"Whom I have begotten in my bonds" (v. 10), a prison trophy. Winning souls, everywhere, all the time.

"But withal prepare me also a lodging" (v. 22). That we will, Paul. Come and bring thy cherished parchments with thee, and thy sweet spirit—and thy Christ!

CHAPTER 59

HEBREWS

Epistle of Better Things. Christ Our Intercessor at the Throne

Key-word: "Better" (Occurring thirteen times)

Key-text: "God having provided some better thing for us"
(11:40)

OUTLINE

See the successive chapter headings below.

THIS Epistle, presumably written by Paul, fixes the eye upon Jesus, "the author and finisher of our faith" (12:2), and sets him before us, for our rest of mind and heart, "*crowned with glory and honor*" in the heavens (2:9). It is the Gospel therefore of the Christ at God's right hand, and we have, once more, "Good tidings of great joy"!

It was addressed, first of all, to the Hebrew Christians, wavering in their faith, looking back to Judaism, but it speaks a timely warning and a word of comfort to all, especially in this day, who, partially instructed in the things of Christ, incline to be led astray by fads or fancies, old and new.

Its one word from beginning to end is, "We see Jesus!" There He is, our divine Head, in the glory, and as He is, so are we in this world. Head and body one, "herein is our love made perfect" (1 John 4:17)—the completeness and satisfaction of the redemption that is ours in Christ Jesus our Lord. Go not aside, then, to alien cults. We have that which is better, better in every way:

Chapter 1. *A Better Spokesman*. "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things" (v. 2). Better than prophets; better than angels,—"*hear ye Him*."

Chapter 2. *A Better Captain*. "For it became him, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain [file-leader] of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (v. 10). And through with sufferings. The Head of the procession having arrived at the glory throne, there also shall the rest of us be ere long—If we abide in Him.

Chapter 3. *A Better Apostle.* "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus" (v. 1). A better prophet and apostle than Moses, Jesus was *one sent* to finish the work. Believe and accept.

Chapter 4. *A Better Rest.* "For we which have believed do enter into rest" (v. 3). Rest here and now. "The rest of faith."

Chapter 5. *A Better High Priest.* "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec" (v. 6). Christ's eternal priesthood. Submit all to Him; trust his grace.

Chapter 6. *A Better Hope.* "Who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us" (v. 18), "which hope we have as an anchor of the soul." Let it grip the throne.

Chapter 7. *A Better Surety.* "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament" (v. 22). "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost [finally and completely] that come unto God by him" (v. 25). Come, and keep on coming!

Chapter 8. *A Better Minister.* "A minister of the sanctuary" (v. 2). Do you know the sweet ministry of Jesus from on high?

Chapter 9. *A Better Advocate.* "Now to appear in the presence of God for us" (v. 24). "Intercede for me!"

Chapter 10. *A Better Sacrifice.* "Through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (v. 10). Keep under the Blood.

Chapter 11. *A Better Faith.* "By faith Abel" (v. 4). All the faithful kept looking forward to Jesus. Join the procession—"There is life for a look."

Chapter 12. *A Better Mediator.* "To Jesus the mediator of the new covenant" (v. 24). He is there! Oh, the strength and the joy of it!

Chapter 13. *A Better Shepherd.* "Our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep" (v. 20). "Saviour, like a shepherd lead us."

MARGINAL NOTES

A Christ at God's right hand is the pledge and potency of our redemption.

Preach the high priesthood of Jesus. The people long for it; they need it—manna straight from the Throne.

Here, in chapter 9, stand out in letters of light our Lord's Three Great Appearings: 1. On the Cross. "Once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (9:26). 2. At the right hand of the Throne. "Now to appear in the presence of God for us" (9:24). 3. In the clouds of glory. "Unto them that look for him shall be appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (9:28).

Dr. Haldeman tersely calls Hebrews 11 "the Westminster Abbey of the Royal Dead." Dead unto the world, alive unto God!

MARKED TEXTS

"For unto which of the angels hath he said, Thou art my son?" (1:5). He says it to you and me *in Christ!*

"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (1:14). The King's children are known by their kingly attendants.

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" (2:3.) A man by the name of Russell tried to teach a new way of "escape" at last, but it is not found in the Word.

"If they shall fall away" (6:6)—from Christ. No hope apart from Him; no fear, along with Him.

"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, *sat down* on the right hand of God" (10:12). A parable in action. "It is *finished!*"

CHAPTER 60

JAMES

Epistle of a Working Faith. Christ Our Pattern

Key-word: "Doers"

Key-text: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only"
(1:22)

OUTLINE

1. Practical Religion (chap. 1).
2. Practical Brotherhood (chap. 2).
3. Practical Wisdom (chap. 3).
4. Practical Piety (chap. 4).
5. Practical Patience (chap. 5).

JAMES is the practical Apostle. He stands for efficiency and consistency, in life and conduct. Like the book of Hebrews, this epistle is addressed to the Jews. Hebrews presents the doctrine: James the deed. They go together in vital Christianity. There is no contradiction between Paul and James. Paul said, regarding the truth as it is in Jesus. Take it in. James said, Live it out. Back of all and above all was Jesus, our risen Lord, who appeared to both Cephas and James (1 Cor. 15:5, 7). Paul saw Him in the heavens, establishing righteousness. James saw him on the earth, executing righteousness. Paul had to do with the sources of our faith. James had to do with the fruits of our faith. One laid the foundations in Christ. The other builded the superstructure in Christ. Thus is Christ again seen to be both "Author and Finisher of our faith." Believe it, live it.

1. *Practical Religion.* The faith you have is the faith you show. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

2. *Practical Brotherhood.* It is a brotherhood that has no "respect of persons" (v. 1) and keeps the commandment, in everyday life, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (v. 8).

3. *Practical Wisdom and Watchfulness* belong to the man

who bridles the tongue along with all the life, and shows "out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom" (v. 13).

4. *Practical Piety*, which is the religion of the soul, draws nigh to God with cleansed hands, purified heart, and a humble spirit (vs. 8-10). It is not the man who is always "looking out for Number One" that wins out in the end.

5. *Practical Patience* endures with a quiet spirit and gives with an ungrudging generosity that confounds the adversaries and brightens the hope. "For the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (vs. 7, 8, 9). In a word, be what you claim to be: practise before men what you profess to be before God; prove your faith by your works; live the Life!

MARGINAL NOTES

Faith without works is unseen of men, as works without faith are unseen of God.

Faith is our justification before God: works are our vindication before men.

Works do not save us, but they are a pretty good evidence that we *are* saved.

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these" (Matt. 25:40) is not a *saving* text, but a *sign* text. What *He has done* is our salvation: what "*Ye have done*," the proof of it.

Keep faith and works in their proper place. "I hear you are opposed to works," some one said to Spurgeon. "No, I I am not," the great preacher replied, "nor to chimney pots; but I would not put them at the foundation."

MARKED TEXTS

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God" (1:5). The kind of needed wisdom James himself was given, most remarkably, in the council at Jerusalem (Acts 15:13).

"And upbraideth not" (1:5). Not holding us to account for past failures. How could we pray otherwise? How could we live?

"Nothing wavering" (1:6). Same word as "staggered" in Romans 4:20, where Abraham "staggered not because of unbelief." Oh, what wavering, staggering prayers we sometimes offer!

"Faith without works is dead" (2:20). Literally *idle, doing nothing*. So rendered in Matthew 20:6. "Why stand ye here all the day *idle*?"

"And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace" (3:18). Plant a little patch of peace, and live there—while you wait.

"The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up" (5:15). But do not arrogate. Remember it is the Lord who raises up. As Dr. Scofield says, "it is equal insolence to say that God will heal only by faith, or that He will heal only by remedies."

CHAPTER 61

1 PETER

Epistle of Precious Things. Christ Our Portion

Key-word: "Precious"

Key-text: "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious"
(2:7)

OUTLINE

1. Precious Blood (chap. 1).
2. Precious Rock (chap. 2).
3. Precious Hope (chap. 3).
4. Precious Mind (chap. 4).
5. Precious Crown (chap. 5).

PETER, who is the apostle of a jubilant hope, addresses this Epistle to the "strangers," scattered here and there. It is a letter to homesick souls. Read it, wanderers, absent far from home, and get the sweet comfort that is in it for you—The Preciousness of Jesus.

Lorn and lonesome, burdened and bound, let it remind you of a near, dear, personal Saviour, the hidden source of all riches, and let it lift you up and fill you with joy. That is its purpose.

Chapter 1. *Precious Blood*. Redeemed "with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (v. 19). The cross, the cross! O brother, pilgrim and stranger, from wherever you are you can see Calvary, and

Jesus dying for you there. His precious blood is the surety of our redemption. "It is finished." Look to Jesus, and live!

Chapter 2. *Precious Rock*. The living cornerstone, on which and in which we are builded. "Chosen of God, and precious" (v. 4). How much are you getting out of the Rock? How much are you building on it? "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious" (v. 7)—in proportion as you believe. Believe therefore, and live!

Chapter 3. *Precious Hope*. "The hope that is in you" (v. 15). Where do you get it? When, as this Scripture intimates, you "sanctify the Lord God in your hearts." Put Him there, and hope follows. We cannot dissociate the gift from the Giver. Having Him, we have all things, including the precious hope of His resurrection, here spoken of.

Chapter 4. *Precious Mind*. "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh [and prevailed, see verse just above], arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that suffered [with Him] in the flesh hath ceased [with Him] from sin" (v. 1). This is far more precious than many realize it to be. In this "same mind" we share not only His sufferings but His victory. Oh, to lay hold of this preciousness! It lies very deep!

Chapter 5. *Precious Crown of Glory*. "Partaker of the glory that shall be revealed" (v. 1). Wonderful present portion. We have a taste of heaven here below, a bit of glory while we wait. "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (v. 4). Put it on, even now. It is yours by faith.

MARGINAL NOTES

Charles Spurgeon's marvelous preaching started here. Can we recall it? A lad still in his teens, there at Cambridge, he was walking out with a friend to a country appointment. "I hope the Lord will bless you," said his companion. "Me!" exclaimed the young missionary. "I never preached." "Well, if you don't preach this time, there will be no preaching," was the reply. Straightway the young man, appointed of God, all unawares, to be the greatest preacher of his age, bowed his head; and when a few minutes later he stood up in the little throng at Teversham he pronounced the words, "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious" (1 Peter 2:7). And the glory of the Lord was there. It was his first text and the theme of all his gracious ministry. Jesus was very

precious to him; and his sermons were very precious to the people. Oh, for another like him!

Is Peter the man with the keys? Very well, here he throws them into our hands, and every door is wide open. That was an interesting little episode, at old Clarendon Street, Boston. "Right here in this study," said Assistant Pastor McElwin to the writer, "Dr. Gordon was sitting one day when O. P. Gifford called out from below, his hand on the doorlatch, 'I want to come in!' Said Dr. Gordon, throwing up the window and tossing down the keys, 'Come right in, then; what's to hinder?'" It became one of Gifford's illustrations of the freedom of the Kingdom. The way is open: Come right on in!

MARKED TEXTS

"Unto salvation ready to be revealed" (1:5). Better still, in the Greek, "unto a salvation that is ready now—finished and complete, and only waiting to be fully *revealed* in the last time."

"The grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:13). Literally, *is being brought unto you*. It is already on the way. Take heart, ye waiting pilgrims. It arrives finally and fully with Him!

"A peculiar people" (2:9). Peculiarly God's—that is all.

"Take it patiently, this is acceptable with God" (2:20). God sees it. God is pleased with it—that is enough!

"By which also he went and preached unto the saints in prison" (3:19). "Preached" here means *heralded*. The message not for conversion—too late for that—but for confirmation. It is done!

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (5:7). And why should two of us bear the same load?

"Stablish, strengthen, settle you" (5:10). The purpose of suffering. Why prolong the work? Get *settled*, brother—established and settled!

CHAPTER 62

2 PETER

Epistle of Hope. Christ Our Saviour

Key-word: "Promise"

Key-text: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise"
(3:9)

OUTLINE

1. When Days are Dark (chap. 1).
2. When Times are Hard (chap. 2).
3. When Men are Heady (chap. 3).

PETER, the Apostle of Hope, again speaks to his little brothers in the faith looking toward Heaven but dwelling for a season in a naughty world, and he stirs up their pure minds "by way of remembrance" (3:1). "Cheer up," he says, "Pilgrims of the night; there's light ahead!"

1. Are the days dark, and does sin abound? Escape "the corruption that is in the world through lust" (1:4) by laying hold of the "exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature." Wonderful truth—Partners of Deity! Lost in this world, but hid in God. O souls, elect of heaven, rejoice. The divine power is behind you; the "divine nature" is within you; the "great and precious promises" are before you. It is well with you. Go straight ahead, "until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts."

2. Are the times hard, temptations heavy, opposition strong? Expect it; rise above it. "Is this vile world a friend to grace, to help me on to God?" The world always has been and always will be full of antagonism to the truth and the truth-bearer. But God will bring it to naught; and in the meantime, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations" (2:9). Be strong, be steady.

3. Are men insolent and heady? It is to be looked for. Satan will not give up his hold without protest. But his days of lease and liberty are numbered—"Jesus shall reign." "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days

scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? . . . but the day of the Lord *will come*." Scorn and scoffing will not hold back the flood when it is unloosed. Gabriel's mighty trump will make short work of men's pitiful "I don't believe," and "I don't think," and "I don't see." "Nevertheless we, *according to his promise*, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (v. 13). Children of God, keep your eyes toward the sunrising! Daybreak just yonder beyond God's hills!

MARGINAL NOTES

Said Charles Simeon, of Cambridge, the man who held the Established Church of England to the evangelical faith in the last century, "I soon learned that I must take the Scriptures with the simplicity of a little child, and be content to receive God's testimony, what he has revealed, whether I can unravel all the difficulties that may attend it, or not."

Second Peter 1 is the Christian Endeavor Chapter of the Bible. The word in the original, rendered variously, occurs three times: 1. The Endeavor of growth in grace. "And beside this, giving all diligence [endeavor], add to your faith virtue" (v. 5); 2. The endeavor of steadfastness. "Give diligence [endeavor] to make your calling and election sure" (v. 10); 3. The Endeavor of remembrance. "Moreover I will endeavor [same word] that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance" (v. 15).

This chapter may also be called the mathematical chapter: 1. Multiplication, "Grace and peace be multiplied" (v. 2); 2. Addition, "add to your faith" (v. 5); 3. Subtraction, "purged from his old sins" (v. 9); 4. Division, "Until the day dawn" (v. 19).

That was a good resolve of Dr. Pierson, not to preach on anything on which God had not given personal illumination.

MARKED TEXTS

"Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge" (1:5). Seven story and basement building. Add story to story, but be sure to put faith at the bottom.

"But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off" (1:9). Near-sighted Christians, "unfit" for enlistment in God's army.

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy" (1:19); rather, *prophecy made sure*. It is not Christian experience (the vision on the mount) contrasted with prophecy but the

word of prophecy confirmed by experience. They go together.

"No prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation" (1:20). Dr. James M. Gray throws light on this text by rendering "interpretation," *origin*. The word is literally *unloosing*. It is God who "releases" it.

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation" (2:9). Better still, he *sees* to delivering; he takes care to do it. As Mrs. Davies, the Bible reader, says, "Don't stop to excuse, or explain: leave it to Him."

"Kept in store, reserved unto fire" (3:7). Ponder these words. The world of old, standing out of the water, and in the water, was destroyed by the water that apparently held it up. Even so the strange, hidden fires which seem to sustain us to-day (see electricity) may, at a touch of God's finger, be unloosed to consume. Therefore watch and be sober.

CHAPTER 63

1 JOHN

Epistle of Assurance. Christ, the Life.

Key-word: "Know"

Key-text: "Hereby we do know that we know him" (2:3)

OUTLINE

1. Fellowship (chap. 1).
2. Abiding (chap. 2).
3. Holiness (chap. 3).
4. Love (chap. 4).
5. Life (chap. 5).

THIS is the "Really and Truly" Epistle. Catch its confident, exultant spirit. John, who was very near to Jesus, leaning on his breast at the table, standing up close to the cross on Calvary, looking into the empty tomb at the resurrection, lifted up on Patmos at last, so as to see even into the "door opened in heaven," gives here his warm, eager testimony. We know! he says, we know! there is no possibility of

doubt about it! "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life,"—Jesus! We really and truly know him. He is our life, our breath, our very being! This is John's fervent witness. Can we make it ours?

1. *In Sweet Fellowship.* "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1:3). We walk together, we talk together, we live together. We eat at the same table. We are one family. God is my Father. Jesus Christ is my Elder Brother. "I am the child of a King!" Can you say it, friend? Do you know it? Then rejoice—this is Heaven on earth for you and me.

2. *In Constant Abiding.* "Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning" (2:24). Which means, Live with God, if you want him to live with you. How? "Keep his commandments." And what are they? "And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (3:23)—Live in faith and love, and dwell with God. Faith is the door opening in. Love is the door opening out.

3. *In Essential Holiness.* "Ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins, and in him is no sin" (3:5), or, follow the Greek order, Sin in him is not, has no place, no existence. Therefore live in Jesus and be pure, absolutely pure. God hates sin and wants holiness. God takes away sin, and gives holiness. But be very humble and self-abased. All the holiness you have is the measure of Christ that is in you and abides. Therefore forget self and exalt Jesus. He is purity, and he alone can purify.

4. *In Reassuring Love.* "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love" (4:8). Love is the first instinct of the renewed heart. Brother, where did you get that love? From within? No, from Above. "We love [Greek], because he first loved us" (v. 19)—and so taught us how to love. And then taught us the gracious meaning of it, which is this (rejoice in it)—"every one that loveth is born of God" (v. 7). And what if a man love not? Alas, alas! He "knoweth not God"!

5. *In Satisfying Life.* "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (5:12). There it is, the straightest, sharpest, and strongest statement of Apostolic word. We have life in Christ! And this greatest

gift in all the world—eternal life—has the greatest evidence in all the world, the witness of the Spirit within. Christian assurance! “And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding” (v. 20). Christian, have you understanding with God?

MARGINAL NOTES

Quaker George Fox was raised up of God to underscore in travail and trial three unique words of revelation, *the witness within!* Thank God for such a light: the faith of Christians has shone brighter ever since!

Let us recall it again. “Martha,”—she was a simple, Scripture-taught Swedish girl in the kitchen, who gave her pastor many clues to the faith,—“Martha, can a man be absolutely sinless?” Swift and sufficient her reply, “All, save his feet.” The lesson is plain. “He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet.” Our spirits are wholly His, but remember the poor sandaled feet that daily walk this earth. Keep under the Blood.

MARKED TEXTS

“That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us” (1:3), *i. e.*, Along with us—but with Him—that is the main thing.

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another” (1:7). Read it one with the other, as the context implies (v. 6), and it will mean more. For only thus does the Blood keep cleansing us “from all sin.”

“If we confess” (1:9). There are five “If’s” here in these five verses, which led that discriminating exegete, Dr. Stifler, of Crozer, to say: This word is hence addressed to Christians—there is no if whatever with sinners. They have no thought of confessing.

“Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him” (3:6). Make the two sentences to balance—“Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not: whosoever *abideth in sin*, seeth not.” Only the pure in heart see God.

“He that is begotten of God keepeth himself” (5:18). Douay: “the generation of God preserveth him,” more literally: “His being begotten of God keeps him”—is his preservation. Are you His, wholly His? Very well, then. What is His, He keeps—and wholly keeps; keeps whole.

CHAPTER 64

2 JOHN

Epistle of Authority. Christ, the Truth

Key-word: "Truth"

Key-text: "For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever" (v. 2)

OUTLINE

1. In Truth (vs. 1-4).
2. In Love (vs. 5-8).
3. In Doctrine (vs. 9-13).

THIS epistle is addressed unto the "elect lady." It is a woman's epistle, and it sets her on high, "for the truth's sake." And we need no "woman's Bible," so called. The whole text of inspiration is for the liberation of woman, and the restoration to her of her Edenic rights and of her equality with man under God. She is always, in God's Word and in the matter of grace and piety, "the elect lady."

1. John refers, first of all, to the *authority of the truth*. "For the truth's sake" (v. 2). It is to this authority that he bows, and by this authority he accords all privileges and honors. But mark that the truth here is not that weak and sentimental thing that men conjure up from within, sometimes called "Christian consciousness." It is truth from above, the Truth as it is in Jesus! This levels all distinctions, this makes us all one. Jesus Christ, God's Son, became incarnate and took away our sins. Jesus Christ, as Lord, ascended to the right hand of God the Father and lifted us up with himself to a new estate, making us all "Kings and priests unto God and the Father" (Rev. 1:16). And now, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither *male nor female*, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28).

2. The Apostle next gives terse, strong emphasis to the *constraint of love*: "That we love one another" (v. 5). And this again is not a meager earth love, born of conditions, subject to change. It is the Love that Jesus brought down from

the skies. The sweet, sane, changeless love of God in the soul that binds all the family of God in one close, strong fellowship. If the authority of the truth links our souls with God, the touchstone of love binds our hearts with our brother man. The heart takes hold of God, the hand reaches out to our fellows—"the love of Christ constraineth us." And this is what counts among men. I cannot see your heart, but I can see your hand, and I know where you belong.

3. And so John's last word is on the "Doctrine of Christ." "He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (v. 9). This is the test of orthodoxy; this *is* orthodoxy,—*the doctrine of Christ*. Not what I think, or what some one else has thought, or said, or done: but what has Christ said? What has Christ done? And this includes, Who is Christ? What is He to you? Son of God! Saviour of the world! Risen Lord! Coming King! Is He this, all this to you? Then, "here's my heart; and here's my hand"—We be brethren. "The children of the elect sister greet thee. Amen!"

MARGINAL NOTES

"Elect Lady" was Madame Guyon, who, in 1688, taught the Christian world how to practise the Presence of God. In a worn volume of her Memoirs, picked up in Whitechapel, we find these words: "The soul that is faithful in the exercise of love and adherence to God is astonished to feel him gradually taking possession of her whole being: she now enjoys a continual sense of that Presence, which is become, as it were, natural to her, and this, as well as prayer, is the result of habit." The habit of holiness.

Another such was Frances Ridley Havergal, who wrote:

"An infinite craving for some infinite stilling:
But now Thy perfect love is perfect filling,
Lord Jesus Christ, my Lord, my God,
Thou, thou, art enough for me."

Saint Frances, we salute thee—now in the Heavens!

Still another St. Frances, "Whom I love in the truth, and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth." The truth, in this instance, with us is the truth of temperance and of purity and virtue, a "white life for two." We refer to Frances Willard, the First President of the White Ribbon Republic. She was our neighbor there at Evanston, over against Chicago. But earlier she was a sweet, winsome lassie in these classic shades of Oberlin, but a step around the corner

from where these lines are written. Her home is with God, but the fruit of her labors is with us in cleansed homes and brightened lives. "Let her own works praise her in the gates."

Ah, for the most of us, after all, the real lady Electa is the dear mother who folded our child hands in prayer and turned our stumbling feet along the narrow way. She is waiting for us yonder in the skies, with her Lord and ours. Thank God, the true children of the Kingdom gather home at last. "Home, home! Sweet, sweet home!"

MARKED TEXTS

"Whom I love in the truth" (v. 1). Our spiritual affinities. Count them over, the men and women in life and literature in whom your soul delights—this is the true fellowship. This is where we live!

"This is love, that we walk after his commandments" (v. 6). The proof of the love is in the walk.

"Many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" (v. 7). Now we know you. If you speak His name, but deny His person—you are a liar and an antichrist! The Book says it.

"But I trust to come unto you, and to speak face to face, that our joy may be full" (v. 12). Take it, if you will, in child simplicity—our appointment with John the beloved: and remember the place—the right-hand side of the throne!

CHAPTER 65

3 JOHN

Epistle of Fellowship. Christ the Way

Key-word: "Fellowhelpers"

Key-text: "We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth" (v. 8)

OUTLINE

1. Helpers of the Truth (vs. 1-4).
2. Helpers of the Brethren (vs. 5-10).
3. Helpers in the Work (vs. 11-14).

IN THE choice inner Circle of believers Jesus is the Life, the Truth, and the Way (1 John, 2 John, 3 John). We live *from* Him. We live *by* Him. We live *with* Him. He is our Heavenly Guest.

Down through the centuries comes the happy pilgrim band, *sent forth* by the Lord, *looking forward* to the Lord, *gathered about* the Lord.

For Jesus is not separated from his people, though the heavens have received him. The Head is there, the Body is here: we follow after, much comforted by the way, for one Spirit animates and inspires us all. It is "Christ in you, the hope of glory"—and the assurance thereof. For a bit of that glory is ours to-day in the radiant fellowship that makes our hearts to glow as we wend our homeward way.

John has been much cheered by the generous hospitality of his friend Gaius, who is the type of the true Christian layman, one who has dedicated his wealth and talent to the Lord. His purse-strings are loose, his latchstring is out; all he has belongs to God, and to God's anointed. Such men, scattered here and there through the years and the centuries, have kept not only the church alive in a friendless world, but have kept Christ's love burning bright in the midst of God's people, otherwise well-nigh hopeless, helpless, and forlorn.

It is what wealth is for, consecrated wealth, dedicated talent. You can be either a Gaius, helping the Kingdom, or a Diotrophes, hindering the cause; *i. e.*, you can use your strength

and ability to make the light of Christ's love shine out, or you can take what God has given you of wealth and power and ability to hide and smother the celestial flame.

Oh, what a splendid thing to be rich and powerful and to lay that God-given strength, all gifts and graces, like Gaius and Demetrius, at Jesus' feet; and so to crown Him Lord of all! "Our friends salute thee. Greet the friends by name." Such friendships last, and such names, into eternity!

MARGINAL NOTES

The truest picture of a Christian missionary is that of Judson, "taking nothing of the Gentiles," but giving, giving—and that gift Jesus!

Happy the Christian worker that has a Gaius somewhere (the writer knows his own—both a Titus and a Gaius), a generous Christian soul, ready with his sympathy and his means, since he cannot go in person, to help forward the Lord's work. John McNeill, of Scotland, had such, and it enabled the preacher to give a broad, brave testimony for the truth where otherwise it would not have been spoken.

Be a Gaius yourself. Open your house and your purse to promote the ministry of the Word. Like Morgan and Cadbury in London, or Wanamaker and Converse in Philadelphia, make yourself the special friend of God's devoted missionaries and evangelists, and write your name large in the annals of the Kingdom.

Have you found your minister, the man who feeds your soul? He is God's gift to hungry hearts, and there are many such to-day. We heard Whyte, of Scotland, saying there at Keswick, "My wife and I have been much put to of late to find a preacher. Oh," he remarked at our wonderment, "There are plenty of pulpits about. But God took away the man that gave us the truth, and we have been looking around for another; and," he added with a happy smile, "God has answered our prayer. He is not a great preacher—just a humble servant of the Lord in a little chapel near by, but—he feeds our souls."

"A prophet's chamber" here and there—a place where you are welcome for the Lord's sake. Who has not known the joy of it along the pilgrim way? Paul and John—and Jesus, himself, laid their heads there, ere the Gates of the City at last swung wide.

MARKED TEXTS

"Be in health, even as thy soul prospereth" (v. 2). "*Gut Heil*" indeed—spiritual health. Does a healthy soul make for a healthy body? Certainly. We have no quarrel with the "scientist" here.

"Even as thou walkest in the truth" (v. 3). Here is our contention. It is the truth of the Word. That is not truth which, as with those who follow "Science and Health," has *no place for the tears of Jesus—because there is no suffering, and has no place for the blood of Jesus, because there is no sin.* Such doctrine is of the Pit, rather than of the skies!

"Bring forward on their journey after a godly sort" (v. 6). Thus hasten the Kingdom, and entertain "angels unawares." God forbid that the sweet grace of Christian hospitality should perish from the earth, for herein do we keep a light shining in the window for our absent Lord. It is the Sign of the Hope!

CHAPTER 66

JUDE

Epistle of Steadfastness. Christ, Our Keeper

Key-word: "Keep"

Key-text: "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling"
(v. 24)

OUTLINE

1. Introduction (vs. 1-3).
2. The False (vs. 4-16).
3. The True (vs. 17-25).

JUDE knew Peter. They walked together with the Master. They doubtless talked together after His departure. They evidently thought together on the great issues of the day. 2 Peter, and the body of this book, though independent and original in each case, are almost identical in conception and language. Both writers are dealing with certain kindred dan-

gers to the doctrine, for they had to wrestle with like enemies of the faith. And we meet with such enemies still. Hence the value of this epistle to the men of to-day. "Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

It is a book of sharp and vivid contrasts.

1. The false followers of the faith, the enemies of the Cross (vs. 4-16). They are not outside, but inside, the church; nominally, at least, but they have "crept in unawares." They are (1) "ungodly men" (worldly). (2) "Turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness" (carnal). (3) "Denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (skeptical). (4) "Despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities" (lawless). (5) "Murmurers, complainers" (critical). (6) "Having men's persons in admiration" (earthly). (7) "Sensual, having not the Spirit" (utterly alien). Alas, what church is without them to-day—with us, but not of us; nor of Him! And it is He that will deal with them at last.

2. The true followers of the faith, bearing the Cross of Christ (vs. 20-23); (1) "Building up yourselves on your most holy faith" (genuine). (2) "Praying in the Holy Ghost" (spiritual). (3) Keeping "in the love of God" (loyal). (4) "Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (devoted). (5) Having "compassion" (merciful). (6) "Pulling out of the fire" (seeking to save). (7) "Hating even the garment" (pure and holy). Thank God for the noble army of the faith. We know them; and so does He! To these latter, with all their burdens and privations is given the richly compensating reward: They are *kept from falling*—while here; they are *presented faultless*—up There. To God, indeed, be glory!

MARGINAL NOTES

Jude is the Preacher of Triple Truths:

Sanctified, preserved, called (v. 1); Mercy, peace, love (v. 2); Flesh, dominion, dignities (v. 8); Cain, Balaam, Core (v. 11); Spots, clouds, trees (v. 12); Waves, foam, stars (v. 13); Murmurers, complainers, lusts (v. 16); Separate, sensual, unspiritual (v. 19); Building, praying, hoping (vs. 20, 21); Compassioned, saved, kept (vs. 22-24).

We have here, set over against each other, the fruits of apostasy and the fruits of constancy; the one a far glimpse of hell, the other a foretaste of heaven. Which?

Jude and Amos and John the Baptist were three of a kind; they laid the axe to the root of the tree. We need such

men to-day, and thank God we have them—Jacob Knapp, Charles G. Finney, Lorenzo Dow, Sam Jones, Billy Sunday—*et id omne genus!*

Keep the graces active, cherish the faith. Did you hear Gypsy Smith: "Papa," said the lad across the table, "there's no sugar in the tea." "Oh, yes, there is, my boy." "No, father; taste it and see." "Ah, but my lad, you haven't stirred it." A moment later—"How is it now?" "It's all right father; its sweet; I forgot to stir it up." Then the swift, sharp application by this prince of preachers, to his congregation: "Stir up the grace that is in you! Stir it up!"

MARKED TEXTS

"The faith which was once delivered" (1:3). Once; and once for all. Thank God, there are some things that are settled!

"Turning the grace of God into lasciviousness" (1:4). License! Banish this word from the Christian vocabulary.

"Ten thousand of his saints" (1:14). Earliest note of the Millennium.

"All that are ungodly" (1:15). The "ungodly" text of the Bible. Word occurs four times.

"Keep yourselves in the love of God" (1:21). Dr. Pentecost came upon a good sister there in Brooklyn, basking in the sunlight. "That is like *keeping yourself in the love of God*," he said. She never forgot it—nor shall we.

"Able to keep you" (1:24). Those who "keep" (v. 21) are *kept*. "'Build,' 'pray,' 'keep,' 'look,' here are the four corner posts," says James M. Gray, "defining the possessions of the Christian life." "To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty!"

CHAPTER 67

REVELATION

Gospel of Last Things. Christ Our Returning King

Key-word: "Come!"

Key-text: "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him" (1:7)

OUTLINE

1. Historical (chap. 1).
2. Typical (chaps. 2, 3). *Ecclesiastical*
3. Prophetical (chaps. 4-22).

THERE are three ways of considering this great book of Revelation: as historical; as typical (that is, to be interpreted spiritually); or as prophetical. It is all of these in a degree; but mainly the latter. In other words, there are three ways of explaining the remarkable divulgences here given: *Preterist*, looking upon the events as past; *Presentist*, viewing them as gradually transpiring in the progressive annals of the world, yesterday and to-day; *Futurist*, looking ahead for their fulfilment. The writer, after holding for a time in part each of these views, reasonable and illuminative in a measure, is inclined in these later days, while still seeing a portion of light and truth in all, to believe that the more safe and sane, and on the whole more satisfying, way to treat the book is to take it as it seems plainly to read; a portrayal of events which, while, like all prophecy, casting their shadows before, are seen to round up at last in a swift and startling series of world fulfilments, yet to be.

Thus Revelation 1:19 may give us our sufficient working outline: "Write the things thou hast seen [the past, a personal introduction], and the things which are [the seven typical churches], and the things which shall be hereafter" (the main body of the book from the 4th chapter on). There are marvelous prevenient fulfilments in history and significant foregleamings of the light in men and movements along the way, but the great dénouement, the Revelation proper, with its un-

rolling panorama, only breaks upon us when with the voice of trumpets—"A door" is "opened in heaven," and a Voice says, "Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter." Hear the Voice from the skies! It has new and wonderful things to tell. Catch the vision of the open door! It reveals stupendous events yet to be, and perhaps not far distant. For the renewing of our faith and the strengthening of our hands, we need, deeply need, these heaven-sent disclosures. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand" (1:3).

CHAPTER ANALYSIS

Instead of note and comment, or as taking their place, we beg leave to give here in Chapter Headings, as we see it to-day, the sharp, swift sequence of unfolding *revelation* depicted in the book.

1. John on Patmos, with the Vision of the Son of man in the glory—the majestic center and source of the Revelation to be given—a gold-letter preface, indeed.

2. The Panorama of the Seven Churches, or the Flock of God here below as viewed from Heaven's standpoint.

3. The Church is on earth in its prevalent attitude toward the King; Christ standing without and knocking at his own door.

4. The Church on high, and its heavenly attitude toward the Lamb in the midst—the door thrown open.

5. The Lamb on the Throne, opening the seals; a worshipful prelude to the Revelation.

6. The Seals broken. A swift preliminary glimpse of the course of events here below in judgment days.

7. A Momentary Pause, for the covenant enshrining of "a great multitude," their garments washed and made white "in the blood of the Lamb."

8. At the Breaking of the final seal, the Seven Trumpets pronounce the Judgments.

9. The Avenging Angels go forth: the Tribulation in process.

10. The last Angel, standing on sea and land, declares that time shall be no more—the culmination of events.

11. Another Pause, in behalf of the elect. The mystery of the Two Witnesses—a dissertation, one of several in detail.

12. The Woman and the Dragon. A second dissertation regarding earth's hostile but fruitless machinations.

13. The Beast out of the Sea. A third dissertation on the working out of God's fell judgments: the overthrow of all Satan's emissaries.

14. A moving glimpse of what, in the meantime, is happening in Heaven: "Lo, a Lamb—and with him an hundred and forty and four thousand!" Safe in God's Sanctuary!

15. A Resumption of judgment scenes in succession. The seven last plagues. A kind of "moving picture."

16. The Seven Vials—another flashlight view or review of God's ultimate punishments.

17. The Woman Arrayed in Scarlet. In detail of God's judgments upon an Apostate Church.

18. Babylon is Fallen! The Announcement of the final discomfiture of an arrogant world.

19. The Triumph of the Truth, and the Splendid Marriage Supper of the Lamb. The Heaven-side aspect of last things.

20. The Binding of Satan for a Thousand years. An Earth-side view of Christ's conquest of the World, and the final overthrow of Sin.

21. The Celestial Scene of the Glorious Culmination. A New Heaven and a New Earth—with sin left out.

22. A Vision of the Abode of the Blest, through all Eternity—with Jesus in their midst. Paradise restored; "Even so, Come, Lord Jesus!"

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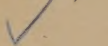
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